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HEAVEN  
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CHILD



# THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS:

or, Thoughts on the Com-  
munion of Saints and the  
Life of the World to Come

*COLLECTED CHIEFLY FROM  
ENGLISH WRITERS BY L. P.*

WITH A PREFACE BY H. S. HOLLAND, M.A.,  
CANON AND PRECENTOR OF ST. PAUL'S

NEW EDITION

*With 8 Illustrations in Colour  
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DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF ONE  
WHOSE WHOLE LIFE ON EARTH REFLECTED  
AND HELPED OTHERS TO REALISE  
THE BEAUTY OF THE LIFE  
WHICH IS ETERNAL



## P R E F A C E

I HAVE been kindly permitted to commend this book to the interest and the meditation of its readers. I will, therefore, venture to say, in a few words, why it seems to me to be singularly helpful and opportune.

The Church is at this moment beset with the task of rebutting the charge of 'other-worldliness.' It was a charge which, perhaps, hit our comfortable habits of thought and practice rather hard. And yet there was no possible charge which, apart from the question of unworthy adherents and inadequate spokesmen, Catholic Christianity could repudiate with a more justifiable indignation. If 'other-worldliness' has been at all a fair nickname for our tone and temper, it could only be because we had pitifully lapsed below the level of our Creed. For, certainly, the Creed of the Incarnation permitted of no contemptuous dismissal of this world in view of after-rewards in a world to come. The Incarnation, on the contrary, threw the inspiration of an eternal

significance into the flesh that we wore, into the life that was made in the image of God and was redeemed into the likeness of the Eternal Son. It poured light and hope and glory down on the entire fabric of earth, of which it disclosed the inner mystery and the divine fulfilment. It exhibited the love and pity of a Father, Who numbered every hair of our heads, and in Whose sight no sparrow falls to the ground unheeded—a Father, Who bent all the resources of His majestic will to the rescue of that world which He had made very good in its original honour, and which even in its fall He yet loved so dearly that He sent His only-begotten Son to save it through His blood. And the final achievement towards which our eyes were set was the coming of the Christ, in the Body, upon the earth, on that day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ. The recognition of our shame in having suffered this rich Creed of the Redemption to fall under the ignominy of a charge which so utterly ignored its profoundest characteristics, stung us into penitent activity; and in our righteous zeal to repudiate the libel and to make amends for our own slovenly slumber, we have poured out our energies in the work of ameliorating the secular



condition of *this* life. We are occupied, morning, noon, and night, with the practical business of the immediate hour. We are eager to draw all that is rightly human within the range of our sympathy: institutes, clubs, recreation, games, music, dancing, excursions—all these are the recognised and familiar departments of the parochial organisation. The priest holds himself intimately concerned with everything that brightens and betters 'the daily round, the common task.' And as the authority for all his secular activity, he eagerly proclaims the kindly Gospel which holds in it the promise of the life that now is.

All this is absolutely right and true. But its very ardour has in it the note of a reaction. Its vivid vigour absorbs the attention, and discards interruptions. It is bound to need balance, adjustment, proportion. We must make some positive effort to hold it within its limits, and to retain within the range of our effectual motives the width, and scope, and depth, and splendour, of that far glory towards which we move, of which this little human life, for all its sanctity and its tenderness, is but the outer entry. We have to recall ourselves lest, in our haste to throw our arms about the poor struggling humanity which draws so strongly upon our Christian heart, we

make a fatal surrender of that Eternal Vision, high and lifted up, when the old heavens and the earth shall have rolled away, and there shall be no more sea. We need that vision, sorely as ever, to stand over against our present sorrow and sighing, and to pledge to us the day when God shall wipe away the tears from every eye. We cannot afford to let this go. It must be felt, as an energising Presence, very near and very real, correcting our bustling business, our passion for present results, our immersion in the preoccupation of the Here and the Now. It must be made possible for our fatigued hearts and distracted spirits to lift their eyes to the Everlasting Hills.

Now, for this possibility to be sustained, we must take more pains with the training of our spiritual imagination and desire. We must apprehend the final issue with a sufficient force of intensity and reality to enable it to resist the battering violence of our every-day interests. Every rise in the power of these human sympathies makes a corresponding demand on the faculties that assist us to embrace the mystical wonders of the Unseen World. These, too, must put out their powers, or they will be choked and overlaid by the vigorous development that has set in on the counter-side.

The counter-side! So we call it. Yet each term of the antithesis strengthens its opposite. The human sympathies receive their expansion and their intensity from the divine and eternal issues, which have interwoven themselves with our earthly incidents. It is the 'other world' which raises to a higher level the interests and occupations of this world. Eternity gives to time all its pregnant value. The passionate pity with which we throw ourselves into the struggles and sorrows of men and women on earth has been created by the inspiration of Him Who brought immortality to light. To sustain this pity we must feed our spiritual apprehension of the life beyond death, which alone gives dignity, and worth, and pathos, and tragic force, to the brief moments, into which we would crowd so much, between the cradle and the grave. If once we had actually withdrawn from our instinctive imagination all sense and prevision of a hereafter, our scale and standard of life would shrink; its importance would be gone; it would cease to impress, to evoke, to kindle; it would fail to make good its old demands upon us. The high language, the poetic passion, the absorbing interest—these would all sound hollow and exaggerated. We should be powerless, after our first period of

youthful hope, to resist the chill pressure of pessimism. The pitiful contrast between the aspirations that have moved mankind and the contemptible limits of man's actual existence would be too oppressive for us to have the heart to fight up against the cynicism which makes that contrast the pivot of its attack.

It is, therefore, just *because* of our direct and positive interest in this world as it is, that we are summoned to lay a faster hold upon the world beyond. We *must* do so, for, otherwise, the outgrowth of the abundant interest will drain too heavily upon a root, which is itself shrinking and shrivelling through lack of supplies. We must take pains, lest in our excitement at the fulness of bud and blossom, we forget to water the soil wherein the secret of all the exuberance lies quietly hidden.

Now, this book offers aid to us in this particular need. It stores and arranges the material by help of which our mind and imagination and will can follow the lines which pass up from this life into the eternal kingdom towards which we move. It shows us how much can be done in the way of fixing our meditation on a world which it is so difficult to embrace within our practical horizon. Much, indeed, will always remain im-



penetrably veiled from us. And no one can read the New Testament and not recognise that this veil has been deliberately drawn over much that we hunger to know. There is here a decisive silence, which may surprise us, but remains authoritative. In nothing does the Bible witness to its own reality more forcibly than by the masterful restraint with which it holds fast to those practical necessities of conduct and character which must be rooted in us here and now, and refuses to make any disclosures which have no positive bearing on present action. We are told nothing whatever beyond what springs from our actual position here on earth, or tells upon our mind and conduct here.

But something there is which does so affect us, and this much we are given.

And it is *this* which our English habits since the Reformation have so disastrously excluded and ignored. We have gone on too long contenting ourselves with a thoughtless and unreasoned picture of a meaningless heaven. And the peril is, that, as soon as we begin to feel the hopeless unreality of this heaven into which all saved souls are imagined to pass, without interval or pause, without effort or discrimination, at the moment of death, then we suddenly drop everything ; we leave ourselves facing a blind vacancy.

And this is either depressing or horrible ; in neither case is it true to the revelation of Christ. For this revelation, without argument or anxiety, without straining or excitement, does, with smooth ease, cross the barrier of death wherever its purpose requires it, and does assume a perfect unity of life, knitting together the members of the Body of Christ, whether they be there or here. It does supply the principles on which that unity stands, and it does suggest the channels along which that life must run.

And, whatever it discloses or suggests, it always assumes that this life which we live here in the Lord is the germ of the eternal life beyond, so that the stages of its development must be coherent and correlative. It permits of no childish disruption of one from the other. It suggests that what we have learned of Christ's methods and work in redeeming us here, will be found still active and real hereafter.

It, therefore, calls upon us to surrender mere pagan dreams of some easy happiness into which we are to discover ourselves, abruptly and without effort, transplanted. It bids us seriously contemplate the tremendous necessities which must regulate all moral and spiritual advance into eternal blessedness.

It bids us prepare, with solemn care, for the inevitable discipline and control of that supreme Society, which moves, in restrained obedience, through the harmonious activities that build up the City of God.

All this implies attention, forethought, meditation, to draw our present existence into close contact with that which shall follow, and to keep that after-life of those, who by God's mercy have passed to Christ before us, very near and present and real to us. So alone can we English, after centuries of painful lapse, recover our hold on the faith that we profess in the unity of the Church and in the communion of saints.

As I have had nothing whatever to do in the collecting and arranging of this book, I may perhaps say how admirably and exquisitely adapted it seems to me for this purpose. It shows how much of concrete and reliable matter there is, which can be fully utilised by heart and imagination, for devotional contemplation.

Concrete and reliable it must be if it is to be a reality to us, who cannot be children if we would, and who shrink with nervous repulsion from the unauthentic imagination that might be innocent enough in a simpler generation. We cannot be as they. We are of another kind. We

cannot but respect the temper of Agnosticism, which is too much in earnest to accept unreal consolation. It is our Dead of whom we speak ; it is the very existence of Religion which is at stake in this question of the Hereafter. And, in face of dread realities such as these, we cannot afford to trifle ; we cannot go one step beyond the point at which a serious faith can still feel the ground under its feet. No mere logic, however forcible, will be trusted as a guide in a land where solid experience fails us.

This book recognises this demand. It indulges itself in no fancy pictures. It keeps within the bounds set it. It exhibits an ordered world that begins here and culminates there ; the transitions are intelligible, the sequences are not unscientific. Some of what it offers cannot be more than what a pious opinion would suggest ; but it will be felt, I think, that nothing is wilful, or arbitrary, or unscriptural, or incoherent. May the Holy Spirit, Who takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, revive in our drooping and unused faculties, by means of that which is here so diligently gathered, the power to behold again the door opened in heaven, and to lay a faster hold on Eternal Life.

H. S. HOLLAND.



## COMPILER'S PREFACE

I HAVE to thank many friends, known and unknown, whose names are found in this book: some for permission to make use of their writings, others for many helpful suggestions.

Especially I must thank Canon W. Bright for the use of six of his 'Ancient Collects,' and Mrs. Brine for the use of Dr. Pusey's works; Mrs. Kingsley, the Hon. Mrs. Noel, Mr. Lewis Morris, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., Messrs. Masters, Messrs. Allen and Co., Messrs. Skeffington, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Messrs. Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., publishers of Bishop Wilkinson's 'Communion of Saints' and F. C. Woodhouse's 'Manual for Lent,' and Messrs. Macmillan for permission to give extracts from Lord Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' and the writings of Charles Kingsley, William Maturin, and Bishop Westcott.

I trust I may be forgiven if I have unwittingly infringed any rights.

L. P.





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## The Communion of Saints.

*Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone ; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord : in Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.—Eph. ii. 19-22.*

*Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.—Heb. xii. 22-24.*

### I

I AM fully persuaded of this, as of a necessary and infallible truth, that such persons as are truly sanctified in the Church of Christ, while they live among the crooked generations of men, and struggle with all the miseries of this world, have fellowship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as dwelling with them, and taking up their habitations in them ; that they partake of the care and kindness of the blessed angels, who take delight in the ministration for their benefit ; that beside the external fellowship which they have in the Word and Sacraments with all the members of the Church, they have an intimate union and conjunction with all the saints on earth as the living members of Christ ; nor is this union separated by the death of any, but as Christ in whom they live is the Lamb

slain from the foundation of the world, so have they fellowship with all the saints who, from the death of Abel, have ever departed in the true faith and fear of God, and now enjoy the presence of the Father, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth ; and thus I believe the Communion of Saints.

BISHOP PEARSON.

All the souls, everywhere, in whom God dwells, dwell together in virtue of that indwelling. They may be separated very far. They may not know each other's tongue. The Divine presence in them may take the most utterly various forms of expression. Their works in life may be entirely distinct. All these are things external. They live together as they both abide in God. The symbols of that inner life are many ; the multitudinous life itself is one. . . . The Communion of Saints is a mutual ministry of saints.

PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Sermons*.

We shall better understand what the Communion of Saints may be in proportion as we can give our hearts, our strength, our lives, to Him who gave Himself for us—to Him who, since He was lifted up from the earth, alone can draw all to Himself, and link them in the one sufficient sympathy of one unending Love. For 'if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another' ;<sup>1</sup> even as 'this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.' It was with such a hope that the great Christian artists painted the joys of the united Church in Paradise ; where all the saints, as they wander among the glories of their home, are ever looking away from the dear companions of their peace and gazing only upon Him who has redeemed them by His Blood : finding in that concentration of all their thoughts and all their love the perfect fulfilment of His promise and their hope, in the unhindered communion of their unnumbered hosts.

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief*.

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John i. 7.



## II

The generations of faithful men who have passed away from this world are still members of the mystical Body of Christ—the Church. Christ who has ‘ascended up far above all heavens that He may fill all things’<sup>1</sup> presents Himself in due form alike in heaven and in paradise and on earth; but the Body in which He does so is the same Body throughout. It is impossible to speak of that Body of living souls in which the life of Jesus is still lodged, without saying that the unseen parts of it are in full and vital connexion with the seen in ‘the Communion of the Holy Ghost.’<sup>2</sup> The dead act upon the living, and are reacted upon by them in ways which it is not easy to state, but which are none the less real. Their recorded lives, their extant writings, the undying consequences of what they did while on earth, the tone which they set; and besides that, their continued intercessions, of which we cannot doubt, and, it may be, still more direct and active interpositions; in all these ways the faithful dead powerfully affect the living world. . . . And in like manner, though we cannot be sure how far their knowledge of current events on earth extends, without question they are in some way interested in these events, so far as they affect the glory of Christ. The successes and failures of the Church on earth, the hastening or retarding of the final Advent, the revivals of true religion or the sinking into lethargy and falsehood,—probably also the spiritual vicissitudes of individual souls with whom the connexion while on earth was close,—all touch the departed, though we may shrink from affirming how. This lies at the base of those latest additions by which the Apostles’ Creed was brought into its present form,—the articles which brought out the descent of our Lord into hell, and which affirmed ‘the Communion of Saints.’ By those articles the Christian consciousness made explicit to itself the feeling that death does not break up the community

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 10.<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

of interests which are eternal. There is so necessary a fellowship between all who are vitally united to Christ that they still, in a sense which was typically shown forth at Jerusalem in the first days, 'have all things common.'<sup>1</sup>

It seems hardly necessary to add, what is within our immediate perception, that the Communion of Saints does not mean only the fellowship of the living with the dead, but the fellowship between those classes amongst themselves also. The welfare of one is the welfare of all.

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

We lose much of the joy of our heavenly expectation if we do not keep in mind the Communion of Saints. Our nature expands by sympathy. The victims of selfishness think to find their joy in that which separates them individually from others. It seems to them as if a joy was well nigh lost by being shared. God be praised, it is not so. There is no true joy for man but what he shares with others. It is so in time, it will be so in eternity. . . . In the Body of Christ we are all made one ; and it is a unity which cannot perish, for it is knit together by the Spirit of the Lord, the Life Giver, who proceeds from Christ the Head of the Body and binds all in the glory of the Father.

Accordingly we find that Holy Scripture calls us to consider the multitude who are partakers of the same joy. The joy we shall have in Christ will be the joy of an intense sympathy with all those who delight in Him ; the joy of each will be the joy of all. Oh, if we could contemplate that joy of His Redeemed, the welcome which awaits each soul as it is gathered away from earth into the blessedness of the Divine Rest ; the fellowship of joy with which the blessed in Christ do even now surround the faithful who are struggling on earth, we should find the power of Christ operating towards us much more effectually than we do !

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv. 32.

Man is naturally led by multitudes. Alas ! that we are so blind to the multitude of Saints. What though we know not their names? That matters not. Their glory is the glory of Christ. It is enough for us that all these have triumphed through Christ; they call on us to follow their footsteps in the same glorious power. . . . All these have lived in Christ and live in Him still. All these have contended against the world in the power of Christ, and bid us remember that the same power remains exhaustless to be our strength in the conflict, and they call us to the fellowship of their joy. The song of heaven shall ring in our ears continually, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.' We falter in our praises because we rise not to the fellowship of the heavenly chorus. How does the life of each individual Christian, in what perhaps seems a solitary struggle, attest the goodness of Christ? How does the collected choir of expectant Saints rejoice in the triumph of their Lord? Yet they were not really solitary in their struggle. No. One with Christ, they were one with each other in Christ. Surely Christ would be much more manifest to us than He is, if we would only bear in mind how He is manifested to us in the collective sympathy, the joyous love of the Communion of Saints.

R. M. BENSON, *Benedictus Dominus*.

### Collect.

O God, Who hast taught Thy Church to keep all Thy heavenly commandments by loving Thy Godhead and our neighbour, grant us the spirit of peace and grace, that Thy universal family may be both devoted to Thee with their whole heart, and united to each other with a pure will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects*.

## III

Unseen, yet not unfelt, the chain,  
The Golden Chain encircling every breast,  
Which, ne'er to meet on earth again,  
Saints that are gone, and that remain,  
Knits through all ages in communion blest.

*Lyra Sanctorum.*

The mystical body in heaven and earth is one. As all rays are united in the sun, so 'all spirits and souls of the righteous,' before or since the Incarnation, are knit and united in one common centre—the person of the King of Saints. . . .

The Communion of Saints is not only that which shall be but that which now exists. There is in the world unseen an unnumbered company which has sympathy with us on earth, and we with them are even now partakers of their heavenly work and worship. . . .

Let us then learn that we can never be lonely or forsaken in this life. Our Lord has promised, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' And in Him all His saints are with us too. . . . They share His sympathy with the Church militant on earth. Shall they forget us because they are 'made perfect'? Shall they love us the less because they now have power to love us more? If we forget them not, shall they not remember us with God?

No trial can isolate us, no sorrow can cut us off from the Communion of Saints. . . . Kneel down, and you are with them . . . only a thin veil, it may be, floats between. . . . All whom we loved, and all who loved us; whom we still love no less, while they love us yet more, are ever near, because ever in His Presence in whom we live and dwell.

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons.*



There is clearly a communion between the saints on earth and the saints that have entered their rest, based on the relation of *Love*. This was the foundation of all the touching commemorations that we find in the ancient liturgies. In those days of a more real and stirring devotion, the dead in Christ were not forgotten ; the unity of the Church was a living and vital truth. Those who were still tarrying on earth for their Lord's coming would not, and could not, believe themselves separated from those whom they had loved on earth, who had joined in the same prayers, who had knelt at the same altar, who had broken the same bread, who had become members of the same mystical body. Where were *they* now whom they so loved and so revered ? the holy, and the just, and the true ; they who had been bound to them by such hallowed ties ; who with them had so earnestly and so longingly awaited the Lord's coming,—who had spread abroad His word,—who had shared His Cross,—who had so eagerly sought to fill up the mystical measure of His sufferings,<sup>1</sup> and who had fallen on sleep before all was accomplished ? Where were they now ? Were they lying in dull unbroken slumber, wrapt in unconsciousness, and darkness, and oblivion ? Or were they far distant, in unknown realms, pursuing with all the energy and intensity of purely spiritual natures mysterious missions, which were ever carrying them farther and farther from those with whom they once had so bravely toiled and suffered, and with whom they had borne the heat and burden of the outworn day ? Ah ! no ; the heart revolted against such an unsympathizing theology ; the spirit within bare witness against it. The ancient Church felt and knew that its true members were all united,—whether in life or death, inseparable,—whether on earth or in Paradise, all one. It could not, and would not, forget them. It felt that though absent in flesh, they were nigh, very nigh in spirit, praising with them the same Lord, praying with them for the hastening of His Kingdom.

Verily *Love* was the corner-stone of the doctrine of the Communion of the Saints.

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 24.

The communion between the holy living and the holy dead exists in the common relation of *Faith*. Could they, who had been sharers in that vital element, who together had realised that substance of things hoped for, that evidence of things not seen,<sup>1</sup> be dissociated either in life or death? What is there in the deposition and divestiture of these earthly elements that can affect a union based on the participation in a common spiritual principle, which the everlasting word of God teaches us is the sole condition of vitality,—which an Apostle has declared, out of the depth of his own personal experiences, as the sole instrument and medium of all true life, whether in the flesh or in the spirit? Relations may be changed, degrees altered; the faith of the pilgrim in the flesh may be less constant and vivid than in the unclothed spirit, that sees with an inward eye along a brighter perspective, where earth-born mist and vapour can neither becloud nor obscure. What now appears indistinct and incoherent may then be found clear in outline, and faultless in symmetry; what seems now but as the mirage, may then be described as the solid towers and battlements of the city of God. The very passage from the world of sense to the world of spirits may involve heightened conditions of belief, a purer and more sublimated faith. Changes there may be; development we may expect; but till faith cease in the fulness of fruition, till we all be for ever and for ever with Him, in whom we have hoped and believed, faith will not cease to be an ever-living bond that connects the holy living and the holy dead,—a bond that time cannot weaken, or death destroy, but that remains vital, energising, and indissoluble.

Scarcely one of the ancient liturgies leaves this holy bond unnoticed, or fails, directly or indirectly, to ground its commemoration of the departed on this common principle of union and life. Thus it is that, in the venerable Oriental liturgy that tradition has ascribed to St. Basil, the Church militant calls upon God to be mindful of the departed, who have professed the *right word of faith*. Thus it is that, in the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 1.

ancient liturgy of Constantinople, the early Christians specially offered unto God *their reasonable service for those who rested in faith*. In faith all were united, all of the same fraternal band ; living servants of the same living Lord, members of the same body, branches of the same vine.

There is the blessed union of *Hope*. In this the waiting and longing servant of the Lord was one with those who had approached to realisation, but who had not yet received the crown. In hope, the Church on earth was tarrying and praying ; in hope, the Church in Paradise was awaiting its consummation of bliss. Hope bound both together in a living unity : in hope was the salvation of the living ; in hope the blessedness of the dead.

BISHOP ELLICOTT, *The Destiny of the Creature*.

### Collect.

O Almighty God, Who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of Thy Son Christ our Lord ; grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*All Saints' Day.*

More and more Stars ! and ever as I gaze  
 Brighter and brighter seen !  
 Whence come they, Father ? trace me out their ways  
 Far in the deep serene.  
 My child, these eyes of mine but faintly show  
 One step on earth below :  
 And even our wisest may but dream, they say,  
 Of what is done on high, by yon empyreal ray.

Yea, in each keen heart-thrilling glance of theirs  
Of other stars we read,  
Stars out of sight, souls for whom Love prepares  
A portion and a meed  
In the supernal Heavens for evermore,  
When sun and moon are o'er ;  
Fixed in the deep of grace and song, as these  
In the blue skies, and o'er the far-resounding seas.

More and more Stars, here in our outward Heaven,  
More and more Saints above !  
But to the wistful gaze the sight is given,  
The vision to meek love,—  
Love taught of old to treasure and embalm  
Whate'er in morning calm  
Or evening soft steals from the gracious skies,  
The dry ground freshening with the dews of Paradise.

All humble holy gleams I bid thee seek,  
Dim lingering here below ;  
So shall the Almighty give a tongue to speak,  
A heart to read and know  
Of Saints at Home, robed and in glory crowned.  
Dews on the lowly ground  
May as we downward gaze true token yield,  
Yea, even in glaring morn, of midnight Heaven's pure  
field.

Stars to the childish eye may gathered seem  
Into strange shapes and wild,  
Lion or Eagle, Bear or Harp—such dream  
As heathen hearts beguiled :—  
Or as a flock untended, roaming wide  
Heaven's waste from side to side :  
But of a central glory sages sing  
Whence all may be discerned in clear harmonious ring.



Such are Saints' ways—the forms so manifold  
Our mystic Mother wears,  
O far unlike our dreamings, young and old !—  
But Faith still onward fares,  
Love-guided, heaven-attracted, till she reach  
The orb whence all and each  
By golden threads of order and high grace  
Are pendant evermore, all beauteous, all in place.

More and more Stars ! behold yon hazy arch  
Spanning the vault on high,  
By planets traversed in majestic march,  
Seeming to earth's dull eye  
A breath of gleaming air : but take thou wing  
Of Faith, and upward spring :—  
Into a thousand stars the misty light  
Will part ; each star a world with its own day and night.

Not otherwise of yonder Saintly host  
Upon the glorious shore  
Deem thou. He marks them all ; not one is lost ;  
By name He counts them o'er.  
Full many a soul, to man's dim praise unknown,  
May on its glory-throne  
As brightly shine, and prove as strong in prayer,  
As theirs, whose separate beams shoot keenest through  
this air.

*Lyra Innocentium.*





PART I

LIFE IN TIME



## CHAPTER I.

### Called to be Saints.

1 Cor. i. 2.

*Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not : for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name ; thou art Mine.—Isaiah xliii. 1.*

GOD created us, gave us life once, and then preserves it. Men grow in stature, they know not how ; they eat, they drink, they sleep, are nourished, they know not how ; and so, day by day, and year by year, pass through the stages of life, through childhood, youth, to manhood, and mature years. So should it be in our re-creation. In Holy Baptism He re-creates us in His own image ; passes His hand upon us, puts the first germ of spiritual life within us, to grow, be nourished, expand, flower, bear fruit, until it take into itself all our old nature, and we become wholly new. It is a spark from heaven, which should be fanned into a flame by the breath of charity, and burn within us until it has consumed all low desires, all selfish thoughts, everything which offendeth ; and yield us pure, a holy, acceptable sacrifice unto God. Such should our Christian course be ; such is the blessed course ; a gradual daily growth, from the first hour when we awake to the thought of God and of our own deathless being, to our final passage, through death, to endless life. Amid manifold hindrances, it may be, will be this growth, sometimes slower, then with quickened life, with fresh impulses, starting into new life, yet, on the whole, even while we grieve over our slowness, one steadfast, should it be, though often unperceived, growth upwards, Heavenwards.

E. B. PUSEY, *St. Saviour's Sermons.*

The mark of a saint is not perfection but consecration. A saint is not a man without faults, but a man who has given himself without reserve to God. In the language of the New Testament every baptised Christian—dead and buried and raised in Christ—is a saint. We are dwelling among saints ; we are saints. That is the will of God for us. If it is unaccomplished, the failure comes through our faithlessness.

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *Social Aspects of Christianity*.

*Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.*—1 Thess. ii. 12.

The righteous themselves know but in part ; they are too weak of sight to behold all that God is doing with them ; they know that they have received a great gift from Him ; that they have powers, and capacities, and sympathies, and an energy derived from the Infinite and Eternal ; that wisdom, and love, and mercy, and purity, have no measure or limit except the nature in which they dwell ; as the powers of seeing or of knowing are limited only by the organisation of the body, and the conditions by which we attain to knowledge : and yet, with this teeming consciousness, the secret of their regeneration is not half known, even by themselves ; they cannot comprehend it because they are comprehended by it, as a thing that is greater than they ; and in it they have their being. And as, on the one side, they are baffled by the greatness of the gift, so, on the other, are they straitened by the littleness of their own finite capacities. They feel themselves beset by earthly tempers, and narrow thoughts, and shadows which fall inwardly upon their hearts, and to their own eyes they seem to be of a dim and earthly nature ; they know of themselves far more evil than good ; the visible and prominent points of their own character are the darker lines, and the gloomier spots, which lie upon the surface ; in their own sight they have no brightness, or, at the best a pale sickly light, often overcast ; and they ask, 'Can this be the gift of righteousness? Can this swerving will, and faint striving, and ready yielding, and often slumber-



ing, and all this throng of hasty tempers, and high thoughts, can all this dwell in the soul of the righteous?

And how must all this perplexity be multiplied when a righteous man falls, be it never so little, from his obedience; when to the abiding sense of inward evil is added the consciousness of fresh transgression! . . . .

From all this we may see what is the hiddenness of our spiritual life—how little it is perceived and understood by others—how imperfectly it is apprehended even by ourselves—how it may be for a time, as it were, altogether hidden from our own eyes; and yet we feel within us something which prophesies of our lot in God's kingdom, and foretells the perfection of our being hereafter; we feel something which pledges to us that we shall not fall back again to the dominion of unrighteousness; something which assures us that we shall not be for ever bounded by the limits of imperfection; we feel yearnings, and aspirations, and breathing hopes, and conscious energies, which reach after a larger sphere of being. And so it shall be; 'for the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'<sup>1</sup>

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.<sup>2</sup>

Heaven is our destined profession for everlasting; and earthly life is our professional education. We are pupils in the art of eternally serving the Divine Master; the Church of Christ is the infant school of the children of God. 'Boys ought most to learn,' said the ancient sage, 'what most they shall need when they become men.' Men, by the same principle, are bound to learn what most they shall need as immortals. We are pilgrims to a dwelling-place of blessedness; and the light that streams through its open portals ought to suffuse us as we approach them. An anticipated beatitude, a sanctity that even now breathes of Paradise, a grace which is already tinged with the richer hues of glory,—these should mark the Christian disciple; and these, as he advances in years, should

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i.

brighten and deepen upon and around him, until the distinction of earth and heaven is almost lost, and the spirit, in its placid and unearthly repose, is gone, as it were, before the body, and at rest already with its God. This may seem but an ideal ; and too sad it is that it should too commonly be only such ; for, once adequately conceive the Christian's gift and privilege, and what have I described which ought not naturally to characterise him ? A being already invested with a deathless life, already adopted into the immediate family of God, already enrolled in the brotherhood of angels, yea, of the Lord of Angels ; a being who amid all the revolutions of earth and skies, feels and knows himself indestructible, capacitated to outlast the universe, a sharer in the immortality of God ;—what is there that can be said of such an one which falls not below the awful glory of his position ?

ARCHER BUTLER, *Sermons*.

## Followers of Christ.

*If any man serve Me, let Him follow me ; and where I am, there shall also My servant be ; if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.*—St. John xii. 26.

*I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*—Eph. iv. 1-4.

*Without faith it is impossible to please Him ; for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*—Heb. xi. 6.

GOD sets before us in the Bible a certain manner and temper of life. It is not that which we should have chosen for ourselves ; it does not promise us much present enjoyment, nor yet does it seem likely to be very effective or strikingly successful ; there is much about it and about the way it comes before us which we cannot understand ; it jars with our natural tastes

and with our natural judgments or common sense. In many points it is even the exact opposite of that which we should design for a vigorous and brilliant and promising character ; we may sometimes have been inclined to think it might do well enough for a monk, or a bookworm, or a woman, but could have no chance in the rough and active competition of the busy world. Yet still God presses it upon us. He tells us it is our true calling, the right employment of all the faculties which He has given us : and He asks us to take it upon faith. He sets it before us plainly in express and declared contrast with the natural means of success, the attractive qualities which make us augur well of men and of their undertakings. ‘ Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts’ ;<sup>1</sup> ‘ God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are’ ;<sup>2</sup> and ‘ the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.’<sup>3</sup> The poor in spirit,<sup>4</sup> the sorrowful, the meek, the patient ; those who resist not evil, who judge not, strive not, seek not their own ;—these are the heroes, the effective and eminent actors in the life of faith : even as their King and Captain was meek and lowly of heart, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.<sup>5</sup> Certainly at first it does not look a likely way to success and fruitfulness ; it is not easy to understand how this can be the victory that overcometh the world. But it is the Divine way,<sup>6</sup>—if we believe God it is the only right way ; it is the way which we must take if we have the same faith in Him which great men have had in themselves and good men in their brethren. And it is a way in which, for all its unpromising look at first, encouragement soon meets us, and light soon breaks upon us : we are not left long without some earnest of the promise, some insight into the wisdom which has guided our feet into this way of peace. And if we would

<sup>1</sup> Zech. iv. 6.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 27.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14.<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. v. 2-12.<sup>5</sup> Isaiah liii. 3.<sup>6</sup> Isaiah xxx. 21.

take one instance from all whereby the great cloud of witnesses, even all Saints, are ready to assure our hope, we might find it very clearly in the work of those to whom the words were spoken : ' If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea ; and it should obey you.' <sup>1</sup>

They trusted him Who so spoke to them : they cherished the little germ of faith, they chose the life which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had set before them as the only good and perfect way : they were meek and pure and truthful and patient ; they told their message, bore their witness, were despised and hated for it, and so laid down their lives.<sup>2</sup> And what is the result ? What have the few outcast Galileans done ? What is the issue of their faith ?

We answer—the universal Church of God. His Church, striving, broken and troubled now on earth, but yearly drawing nearer to its perfect triumph. His Church, gathering out of every nation<sup>3</sup> in the world unnumbered souls of men and women ; purifying, blessing, ennobling, sanctifying them ; filling them with all the fulness of their Saviour's peace<sup>4</sup> through the means of grace ; and guiding them through the valley of the shadow of death by the revelation of the hope of glory.

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief.*

### Collect.

Almighty God, who didst give such grace unto Thy holy Apostle St. Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay ; Grant unto us all that we, being called by Thy holy Word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil Thy holy commandments, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Prayer Book.*

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xvii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vii. 9, 14-17.

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah lx. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. xii. 1, 2.



## CHAPTER II.

### The Saints.

*They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*—Daniel xii. 3.

*How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints.*—Wisdom v. 4.

Each sex and each age has its saints to imitate.

S. AUGUSTINE.

I do not see why we should object to admit what even the religious thought of heathens had no reluctance to allow—that some persons are, even in point of character, if we may use the expression, favourites of Heaven. Some persons certainly appear to have a nature richer in good than others, and to have that well of spiritual water deeper ; that is to say, there is a difference which we cannot wholly account for by acts of will. In some even this strength of the spiritual affections appears to clear the way for them altogether from the first. I mean that some persons certainly exhibit, from the first dawn of their existence as moral agents, a spiritual type that is not only a law written in their hearts, but an implanted goodness and beauty of character, which carries them instinctively to that good which others reach only by many struggles and perhaps many falls. Such have many of us seen—sometimes in humble life, faithful and devoted, loyal to man and full of melody in their hearts to God, their life one act of praise ; sometimes in a higher sphere, living amid the pride of life, but wholly untouched by its spells ; free and unensnared souls, that had



never been lighted up by the false light and aspirations of human life or been fascinated by the evil of the world, though sympathising with all that is good in it, and enjoying it becomingly ; who give us, so far as human character now can do, an insight into the realms of light, the light that comes from neither sun nor moon, but from Him who is the Light Everlasting. Some such, perhaps, have some of us seen, and watched their course even up to that time when the tabernacle which veiled the spirit dissolved, and left us wondering ;—and tracking the line of light left on our memory. How or why have these victors gained their crowns without the disfigurement and alloy of that struggle which leaves its stamp on so many ? We know not. It is a mystery to us. But we must recognise the fact that it does please the Almighty to endow some of His creatures from the first with extraordinary graces. It may be partly perhaps to show us what goodness is in its most admirable form,—in the form, that is, in which it will exist in another world ; that of the real nature of the man. Those who acquire goodness by much struggle and effort have their high merit, but it must be admitted they do not always show goodness off to the best advantage ; it is apt to betray too much in them the machinery of its growth, and to be in some degree formal or artificial in tone : but another kind of formation more immediately from above corrects the impression, and reveals in some degree what virtue is in its natural and eternal form. Let us thank the Holy Spirit for those admirable creations of His, the saints, who exhibit His own immediate handiwork, by the sight of whom He designs to teach and to inspire us.

J. B. MOZLEY, *University Sermons*.

The elect exist for the sake of the wicked world ; they are God's instruments for reaching, teaching, converting the world. As their Master lived and died on behalf of a godless world, even so are they in the world. Is their task complete ? Is their use over ? . . .

Let us be brave enough to believe that the world may ye

be won, that Christ has many a victory before Him. This hope will buoy us up ; for it will explain to us why God keeps in the far background, why He hideth Himself, why He suffers such long years to go wearily past with their hideous story. We shall recognise the dauntless and invincible mercy of God that spares, and lingers, and hopes on ; and so we shall not despair of God, even though we have to see what now we see—the terrible strength of the world's power.

And if at some dark hours our hearts sink, and we wonder whether anything is being achieved, whether our hope can be real, whether it can be worth while to wait on and trust, then, beloved, let us remind ourselves that we have no gauge by which to measure the gains and the losses. We are not in a position to estimate God's winnings, for we know not yet what we shall be hereafter ; we know not what God has in view, in store. His ultimate aim is hidden, far, far beyond the veil of death. And in view of that hereafter He may well be gaining more than we think out of this dark and chaotic probation on earth. For God gains if only He can save a soul from that deliberate and defiant recoil from holiness which makes the case desperate. He gains if only He can secure in a soul that its deepest wish, its core of will below all its wretched, woebegone falls and defilements, have something in it of belief in goodness, of appeal to God—retain some inner motion at its root which issues out of life's trials with an upward, not a downward, tendency. If only He can win this, then there are some possibilities hereafter ; there is something secured which the discipline and the purging of spiritual penitence can develop, cherish, and quicken. That soul will not have fallen outside the working of Christ's atonement. It may be saved, though as by fire, though after many stripes.

And who can say what possibilities of this kind are not being kept open by the presence, amid the throngs of a wicked world, of some rare saints of God—some rare and holy souls, who all their days may have felt themselves lost, broken,

depressed, forlorn, girdled in by seething sins of men, which they could not restrain, or rebuke, or put to shame? So it had seemed to them. All their life had been a desperate defeat, and they passed out in neglected deaths, and the world rolled on its triumphant way more audaciously than ever. So it seemed to their sad eyes as they sighed for the far hidden Jerusalem. And yet ever as they moved about, the hearts even of those who laughed them down and went on in their old, bad sins—even the hearts of these had all the time felt a strange touch of inner attraction, a strange quiver of spiritual recognition. Even as they rejected their message and scorned and drove them under, yet this one and that had said quietly, far down in their buried selves: 'Those are good men; they are better than I. I would I were as they.' So they whispered, and that dim recognition may have saved them for Christ. . . . Ah! who can say what is going on about us? How startling now and again to us the sudden revelation of some deep lying heart of grace, within those whom we deemed the worst and most hopeless! . . . Yes, though the sinners be very many and the saints very few, it may be that their scattered presence saves the bad man from sinking—keeps possibilities open. The salt of the faithful may be doing far more than we can ever guess in keeping open channels, narrow and pinched it may be, but at least clean, by which the mercy of God can enter in and retain its hold upon a fallen world, which may yet be rescued.

So we will plod on to the end; we will not ask to count God's gains. Hereafter, oh, how blessed the joy, if, indeed, by God's grace, it be given to any of us, to learn all the futility of our childish impatience, as we are shown by the Spirit the real harvest that Christ was ever reaping, off fields that once looked to us so desolate and barren. This may be ours hereafter if we be not all unfaithful to the blood of sprinkling; and for the present we will desire not to be taken out of the world, but to be kept from its evil. For the present let it be enough that the Lord direct our hearts unto the patient waiting for Christ.

H. S. HOLLAND, *On Behalf of Belief.*

Much of our need of consolation comes from the littleness of our life, its pettiness and weariness insensibly transferring itself to all life, and making us sceptical about anything great or worth living for in life at all ; and it is our rescue from this debilitating doubt that is the blessing which falls upon us when, leaving our own insignificance behind, we let our hearts rest with comfort on the mere fact that there are men of great, broad, generous, and healthy lives,—men like the greatest that we know.

The power of mere activity is often overrated. It is not what the best men do, but what they are, that constitutes their truest benefaction to their fellow-men. The things that men do get their chief value, after all, from the way in which they are able to show the existence of character which can comfort and help mankind. Certainly, in our own little sphere, it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the people whom we know it is not necessarily those who are busiest, not those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible change and work. It is the lives, like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. It seems to me that there is reassurance here for many of us who seem to have no chance for active usefulness. We can do nothing for our fellow-men. But still it is good to know that we can be something for them ; to know (and this we may know surely) that no man or woman of the humblest sort can really be strong, gentle, pure, and good, without the world being better for it, without some body being helped and comforted by the very existence of that good ness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Sermons*.



## Lights in the Firmament of Heaven.

*These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.—*  
Rev. xiv. 4.

WHEN the Son of God passed into the heavens, He began to draw after Him a glorious train of saints, like as the departing sun seems to draw after him the lights which reflect his own splendour, till the night starts out full of silver stars. So shine the saints in an evil world; rising and falling above the boundaries of earth in steadfast and silent course, till all are lost in the brightness of the morning: and so shall the firmament of the Church break forth with the glory of the Resurrection.

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*, vol. i.

As the first and noblest saints of the old Covenant lived more in being a blessing to the nations of the earth than for their own personal joy in God, even so they also in whom are manifested the higher developments of Christian faith and love and self-sacrifice, the brighter stars studding the luminous atmosphere of the milky way of the Christian hemisphere, shine out, not to rejoice in the kindling of their own fires, but 'for signs and for seasons, and for days, and for years, for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon earth,' to be like the angels whom they emulate, who while 'always beholding the face of their Father which is in Heaven,' are at the same time 'ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.'<sup>1</sup>

T. T. CARTER, (*The Life of Sacrifice*) *Lent Lectures*.

'Is it Christ's light is too divine,  
We dare not hope like him to shine?  
But see, around His dazzling shrine  
Earth's gems the fire of Heaven have caught:

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 14.



Martyrs and Saints—each glorious day  
Dawning in order on our way—  
Remind us, how our darksome clay  
May keep th' ethereal warmth our new Creator brought.

*Christian Year—Sunday next before Advent.*

Collect.

Hear us, O never-failing Light, Lord our God, our only Light, the Fountain of Light, the Light of Thine Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers and of all intelligent beings; Who hast created the Light of Thy Saints, may our souls be lamps of Thine, kindled and illuminated by Thee. May they shine and burn with the Truth, and never go out in darkness and ashes. May we be Thy house, shining from Thee, shining in Thee; may we shine and fail not; may we ever worship Thee; in Thee may we be kindled and not be extinguished. Being filled with the splendour of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, may we shine forth inwardly; may the gloom of sins be cleared away and the light of perpetual faith abide within us. Amen.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects.*

## CHAPTER III.

### The Spiritual Character.

*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*—St. John iii. 7, 8.

THIS text conveys the idea that spiritual characters spring up in an unknown way, and that we cannot account for them or give an explanation of them, as we can of other and ordinary characters. Thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth—this spiritual temper and disposition. . . As the wind, which rises we know not whence and goes we know not whither, so is every one that is of this Spirit. The New Testament describes, in various parts, what this spiritual character is, its expressions and manifestations; but there is one gift which sums up all the features of it—the gift of love or charity. This is a great, comprehensive term in Scripture, to denote a certain combination of qualities of mind, and there is a description of such a person given by St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians which has stood as the great Christian portrait in all ages. No words, however, not even those of Scripture, can avail us, or make us understand this character, unless we have that within us which leads us to discern it when we see it, unless our own perceptions are arrested by some peculiar forms and manifestations which naturally impress us as spiritual. Without being able to express accurately all we mean by love, we recognise it when we meet it. There are those who stand out from among the crowd, which reflects merely the atmosphere of feeling and standard of society around it, with an impress upon them which

bespeaks a heavenly birth. Their criterion of what is valuable, and to be sought after, is different from that of others. They do not press forward for the prizes of this world ; they stand apart from the struggle in which common minds are absorbed. But they do this without spiritual pride, they think little of themselves and much of others, and they have a love of their brethren, and of all whom God has made after His own image. They have these and other great common characteristics, though they have differences of natural disposition ; and exhibit the action of Divine grace each in the form in which his natural character is adapted to show it.

Now when we see one of these characters, it is a question which we ask ourselves : How has the person become possessed of it ? Has he caught it from society around him ? That cannot be, because it is wholly different from that of the world around him. Has he caught it from the inoculation of crowds and masses, as the mere religious zealot catches his character ? That cannot be either, for the type is altogether different from that which masses of men, under enthusiastic impulses, exhibit. There is nothing gregarious in this character ; it is the individual's own ; it is not borrowed ; it is not a reflection of any fashion or tone of the world outside ; it rises up from some fount within, and it is a creation of which the text says, 'We know not whence it cometh.' We know, indeed, that, from whatever source it springs, it arises in conformity with all those truths connected with what we call free-will. But Scripture still proclaims the source of it to be mysterious, and if we ask about it, it tells us, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth.' It rises up in one person and another person, here and there ; but wherever it arises it reveals itself as an individual phenomenon, not belonging to a class or made by an education.

We know the history of the worldly character, we know the history of mere religious zeal ; both of these are borrowed respectively from society and from crowds ; they are fully discovered and mapped out ; but we do not know the history of that character which is a birth of the Divine Spirit. That is the manifestation of which 'thou canst not tell whence it

cometh.' It is indeed on account of this, and because its origin is lost in the mystery of God's spiritual creation, that the contemplation of it excites at once our awe and love. We see that the character is intrinsically of such a nature that it could not possibly be engendered from the impress of society, or the infection of a multitude ; that it is no earthly manufacture, and no copy or reflection of an outside pattern, but that it is an inspiration from the fountain-head of all life and goodness. And it is because we see this that we know it to be spiritual.

The character which has the unknown origin is itself a prophecy and presage of another world, because it seems made for it. Its source and its destination then are alike beyond our sight. We do not see that Great Spirit from which the sons of God derive their birth ; we do not see that heavenly society of the spirits of just men made perfect toward which they are journeying. Whence they come and whither they go we see not ; and that because they are born of the Spirit.

It is thus that what is truly spiritual in man is also represented in Scripture as that which is most inward, most original, and also, in a certain true sense, most natural ; that which is most his own, in distinction from being a mould given to him by others,—by fashion, by the outward standard of society, by the dictation of crowds, by current views, modes of speech, and dominant phrases. We see the influences by which the man is in vast numbers of cases made ; that the process of his formation is as visible a one as that of a piece of manufacture ; that he comes shaped out of the hand of some great outward public machinery, power, and influence. But for this very reason that we see whence he cometh, the character does not answer to the test of what is truly spiritual in Scripture. The special criterion of Scripture is, that we do not see whence it cometh ; that it springs up from a fountain of its own, that it is owing to a power which we cannot trace, which is visible only in its effect, like the wind, of which we hear the sound but know not where it comes from. Undoubtedly no Christian stands by himself without the aid of others ; religion is social, and among the means which Christianity employs for the conversion of the



human heart and the education of mankind, there must be the influence of masses and numbers. But still, with all this, there is no mistaking the test by which the Gospel has discriminated what is spiritual from what is earthly in the formation of character ; that it takes us away from a palpable and visible sphere of production to a mysterious one, and from an external source to an inward one.

Let us then adore the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life ; let us commemorate His greatness and His majesty, His power over human hearts, His work of spiritually creating and inspiring human souls ; and let us commemorate the fruits of His inspiration, the characters of the just, the pure, the unworldly, the disinterested, the simple-minded, those who have been the salt of the earth, and the mementoes of heaven, who have been born of Him. Let us thank God for those who have witnessed by their lives to the truth of Christianity, and proved their own faith in another world by not thinking much of this. And, 'seeing we are compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses, let *us* lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.'

J. B. MOZLEY, *University Sermons.*

### Prayer.

O Eternal God, the Great Father of Spirits, the great lover of souls, who didst send Thy Holy Spirit upon Thy Church in the day of Pentecost, and hast promised that He shall abide with Thy Church for ever ; let Thy Holy Spirit lead me into all truth, defend me from all sin, enrich me with His gifts, refresh me with His comforts, rule in my heart for ever, conduct me with His truths, and lead me in the way everlasting, that I, living by Thy Spirit, and walking in Him, may by Him be sealed up to the day of redemption. O let Thy Spirit witness to my spirit that I am the child of God, and make me to be so for ever, through Jesus our Lord ; who liveth and reigneth with Him in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

JEREMY TAYLOR, *from the 'Book of Private Prayer.'*



## Consecrated to God.

*Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*—I Cor. vi. 19, 20.

It is by the still strength of a holy character that we must leave the stamp of God upon the world. H. E. MANNING.

THERE are no circumstances so poor but that character may display itself and make itself therein. Strength of character lies not in demanding special circumstances, but in mastering and using any that may be given. Our work and daily contact with our fellows form our scene of action, and God blesses with a peculiar blessing the efforts to put to profit, not some self-selected occasion, but the actual conditions in which we find ourselves. . . .

The one enduring interest of human life is character, and our faith brightens our lives by unearthing character. . . . It proclaims that our 'life is hid with Christ'; we are wholly free, nothing can hold us down; gifted with a refuge far above all accidents and risks, we have an indefeasible advantage over all earthly circumstances. 'Hid with Christ, free with the freedom of the Son,' nothing can thwart or terrify us; safe hid from the provoking of all men, no man can snatch us out of His Hand. . . .

We are sent down to be a spectacle to men and to angels, and the eyes of the Heavenly hosts are upon us. They are saying over us as they watch: 'What will this man do? What is that hidden virtue now in his soul? What will he do, what will he prove himself, what excellences of character will come from him, as he meets the shock of circumstances?' That is our drama. Do we, then, shrink back from the test? do we decline the troubles and anxieties from which our character is to disclose itself, by which that which is told us of the Spirit in the secret chamber is to be made manifest on the house-tops? Long, weary, plodding labour, this is the condition for which we have been gifted, these are the hours that tell our

tale ; it is thus we bear our witness. Life, this dull, working life, may become to us so favoured, so interesting, so precious if we take it all as the theatre on which we display before the eyes of God the glory of that hidden name which we have received from Him. That which we are in God's thought and intention, that is what we are discovering to ourselves and others at each passing hour. Let us ask ourselves, What is my name? What is the peculiar combination of moral qualities which is in us and no others? The seed cast into me of God—oh, that I knew what mystery was hidden in its silent history ! Let the rains of God come, and the winds and the clouds pass over me, if only this name may break out and open into shape of flower and fulness of fruit, and so my name may be written broad and clear on my forehead, and all men may see it, and say, 'He is not his own, he is God's. Behold the seal is on him. He is in the image of his Father. He is of the family of Christ.'

H. S. HOLLAND, *Creed and Character*.

## Walking in Love.

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.—1 St. John iv. 7.*

It is like passing from death unto life, to escape from selfishness, and to learn, truly and wholly, to love one's fellow-men, and to find the love that God has put into their hearts. While a man is seeking his own advantage, eager for his own pleasure, indulging his own temper, he is not really living : he is like one walking in his sleep, busy with the phantoms of his dreams, and seeing nothing of the real life that is going on around him. But then, suddenly, or gradually it may be, God's grace awakens him and opens his eyes to the real truth of life.<sup>1</sup> It may be that something dashes a cherished pleasure from his grasp : or sickness or bereavement cripples for ever his power of enjoyment ; or else, perhaps, God, in his gentleness

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxix. 15.

of compassion, deals with him otherwise, and teaches him simply by lessons of happiness and thrills of blessing :—but somehow he sees the blunder, the stupidity of selfishness :—he find out the happiness of loving, and the undreamt-of grace of love that is ready to greet him all around : he begins to watch and work for others ; and again and again God cheers him with some glimpse of answering gentleness, some token of the grace that is astir about him, and so he comes to know that he has passed from death unto life because he loves the brethren.

There is no true learning, no true getting-on in life apart from that. Love is life, and lovelessness is death. . . . Love, true pure love towards God and man, is the very essence and meaning of the Christian life. As the grace of God changes a man's heart and cleanses and sanctifies him, this is the great evidence of the change, this is the great difference which it makes : that he begins to grow in love,<sup>1</sup> to lay aside self-seeking, and to live for others—and so he may know that he has passed from death unto life. He may know it even here and now—yes, that great discovery of love, that learning to live for others and finding the grace and gentleness that God is keeping up all over the world—even now it is the way from death to life.<sup>2</sup> Even now it changes homes, it lightens every burden, it brings peace and gladness into the hardest days ; it alters even the tone of a man's voice and the very look of his face. But all this, blessed and surpassing as it is, far above all else in the world, still is but the beginning. For that life into which we pass, as God's dear grace of love comes in us and about us, is the very life of Heaven. Yes, we are never so near Heaven, we can never get so true a thought of what it is, as when some great glow of love is filling our hearts. St. John tells us so : ' Beloved,' he says, ' it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him,' and He is love. On our way to Paradise and Heaven all else must drop away from us, all else must be unlearned, save only the love which we have felt or found :—that silent, hidden grace is the only thing in all

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17.

the world of which we are quite sure that we can take it with us. . . .

This is the great business and meaning of our life on earth : that we should more and more yield up our hearts to God's great grace of love ; that we should let it enter ever more fully and more freely into us, so that it may even fill our whole heart and life. We must day after day be driving back, in His strength, the sin that doth so easily beset us, and the selfishness that sin has fastened in our hearts : and then His love will day by day increase in us. Prayer will win and keep it ; work will strengthen and exercise it ; the Bible will teach us how to know and prize it, how to praise God for it ; the Holy Eucharist will ever renew and quicken its power in our hearts. And so (blessed be God !) love and joy and peace will grow in us, beyond all that we can ask or think ; and He will forgive us, for love's sake, all the failures, all the faults in whatever work He has given us to do ; and will bring us at last into the fulness of that life which even here He has suffered us to know ; into that one Eternal Home, where Love is perfect, and unwearied, and unending ; and where nothing ever can part us from one another or from Him.

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties for Belief and Disbelief.*

Where love is, there is no toil. ST. BERNARD.

### Collect.

O Lord, Who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth ; Send Thy Holy Ghost and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee : Grant this for thine only Son, Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

*Quinquagesima Sunday.*

Wouldst thou the life of souls discern ?  
 Nor human wisdom nor divine  
 Helps thee by aught beside to learn ;  
 Love is life's only sign.



The spring of the regenerate heart,  
The pulse, the glow of every part,  
Is the true love of Christ our Lord,  
As Man embraced, as God ador'd.

E'en so, who loves the Lord aright  
No soul of man can worthless find ;  
All will be precious in his sight,  
Since Christ on all hath shin'd :  
But chiefly Christian souls ; for they,  
Though worn and soil'd with sinful clay,  
Are yet, to eyes that see them true,  
All glistening with baptismal dew.

Then draw we nearer day by day,  
Each to his brethren, all to God ;  
Let the world take us as she may,  
We must not change our road,  
Not wandering, though in grief, to find  
The martyr's foe still keep her mind ;  
But fix'd to hold Love's banner fast,  
And by submission win at last.

*Christian Year—2nd Sunday after Trinity.*



## CHAPTER IV.

### The Inheritance of the Saints.

*The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him : the eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 17-23.*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.—1 Peter i. 3-5.*

*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.—1 Cor. xv. 22.*

THIS is the new workmanship of God, that we, having been created, and having marred the Divine Image in us, are 'created' anew<sup>1</sup> 'in Christ Jesus'—a creation, though but commenced in Baptism and to be perfected afterwards, yet far greater than the first, and having, like our natural birth, in very infancy, wrapt up in it, the whole, the full-grown being. This

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 10.

is our justification,<sup>1</sup> that we are *in* Him; this our sanctification,<sup>2</sup> to be *in* Him; this our redemption, *in* Him<sup>3</sup>; this our calling to the eternal glory of God,<sup>4</sup> '*in* Christ Jesus'; this our hope for those who are departed before us, that they are fallen asleep<sup>5</sup> *in* Him; are dead but *in* Him,<sup>6</sup> '*the dead in* Christ'; this our hope in the Day of Judgment,<sup>7</sup> that we 'may be found *in* Him'; this our perfecting, that we may be presented perfect<sup>8</sup> '*in* Christ Jesus'; this our endless life, that '*in* Christ we shall all be made alive'; this the consummation of all things, that the blessed angels who needed not redemption and ourselves the redeemed, as we are in some unknown way one Church now, so shall we visibly be one Body then, when He shall 'gather together in one all things *in* Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth,'<sup>9</sup> and the whole family in Heaven and earth shall be named of Him, and God be all in all, restoring the harmony which was broken by our fall, and making all one for ever, in endless peace and rest, by dwelling in all, Himself the Life, the Joy, the Will, of all whom He hath made one by taking them into Himself.

E. B. PUSEY, *Sermons*.

A dying body is adapted to the world of sense and time, a deathless spirit is meant and made for a world immortal as itself. Created eternal, it is intended, from the instant of its birth, to breathe the air of eternity. It is at home only in its own high sphere of being; connected by a visible frame with the present world, it is itself invisible, and lives by the Invisible. Through its own proper organs,—through Faith, and Hope, and Love divine,—it already commences with that eternal scene, and the God of that eternal scene, where hereafter, disburdened of its earthly fetters, it is to dwell and to rejoice for everlasting.

ARCHER BUTLER, *Sermons*.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 1; Gal. ii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i. 7.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Phil. iii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> 1 St. Peter v. 10.

<sup>4</sup> 1 St. Peter v. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Thess. iv. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Col. i. 20.

<sup>9</sup> Eph. i. 10.

### Prayer.

We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate us with Thy Holy Spirit, to receive us for Thine own children by adoption, and to incorporate us into Thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech Thee to grant, that we, being dead unto sin and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in His Death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as we are made partakers of the death of Thy Son, we may also be partakers of His Resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of Thy holy Church, we may be inheritors of Thine everlasting kingdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Prayer Book—Public Baptism.*

### The Lot of the Saints.

*Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.—Col. i. 12.*

It may be that the thought of the Apostle rested for a moment on that hour of 'fearful joy' when the victorious nation entered on an earthly Canaan, and He who had cast out 'the heathen before them, caused their land to be divided among them for an heritage.' But it glances at the foreshadowing only to enhance the reality. Here is a lot infinitely more fair and bright than

The limpid wells, the orchards green,  
Left ready for the spoil.<sup>1</sup>

Here is the ultimate term of faith and hope, the last inheritance of the sons of God, wherein each one has his share. That of which those words of the Lord Jesus were spoken, the figure only being varied, 'In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.'<sup>2</sup> 'The lot of the saints that lieth in the light.'<sup>3</sup> It is the glory that shall be after the general Resurrection in the last Day—the glory, the perfect

<sup>1</sup> Keble.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xiv. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Alexander.

consummation and bliss both in body and soul, into which they shall enter who then receive the gracious benediction : 'Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.'<sup>1</sup> That is in its fullest signification the inheritance, the lot of the saints in the light, when they come to appear face to face before the presence of God, as St. John assures us 'the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of the Lord did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof.'<sup>2</sup> And they also shall be clothed with light. For this light is the final perfection of holiness, glory and joy. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'<sup>3</sup>

It also includes, as the last development includes the earlier stage, 'that region of light' (to use the exquisite language of the first Prayer Book in the English tongue) 'with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the place where is no weeping, sorrow, nor heaviness,—the place of light, refreshment and peace, the Paradise of God, into which those who are laid to sleep through JESUS' are admitted ; whither departing, 'to be with CHRIST, which is very far better,'<sup>4</sup> they await the accomplishing of the number of the elect, and the coming of the end. There 'the souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, and there shall no torment touch them.' The journey of life is ended, the last enemy faced and overcome, the cup of suffering has been drained, and now 'they are in peace.'

But the inclusiveness of the words is wider yet. The 'blessed inheritance may be entered upon in part here upon earth.'<sup>5</sup> When the Sun of Righteousness was arisen, then was the darkness past, and the True Light shone. And thus not only does the lot of the saints beyond the grave lie in the light, but Christ's Church Militant here upon earth is in the light also. The holy dead and the holy living make but one Body, they are 'knit together in one communion and fellowship.' On both alike the Light of the world shines, in His light do all that are His see light, only they who are delivered from the burden

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxi. 23.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 43.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Ellicott.



of the flesh, who have entered on an experience into which our eyes are holden, so that we cannot follow them, dwell in a light impossible for us who have not as yet attained.

And because the present lot of the saints who are yet sojourners on earth thus lieth in the light, therefore the character of light is impressed on the Church, and the vast and solemn responsibilities of so magnificent a heritage follow in inevitable course: 'Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light; (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.'<sup>1</sup>

'Meet for the lot of the saints that lieth in the light.' Beyond any kind of doubt God does make us meet, or, as the word is literally, sufficient, for the inheritance of the saints. How many a one has passed before us out of the darkness of death by the pathway of penitence into the glory beyond the veil! So may it be with ourselves, though the grace of our Baptism have been long neglected, and the tokens of light upon us have grown faint and dim. So may we claim the promise and so work out His purpose. 'He never faileth them that seek Him.' He can and he will supply all our need till the crowning change be accomplished, till the Lord from heaven 'change the body of our humiliation, that it be fashioned like unto the Body of His glory.'<sup>2</sup>

And the time is short, it 'passeth away like a shadow.' Each year sees some whom we have personally known, or of whose good report we have heard, depart to be numbered among the 'spirits and souls of the righteous,' whom in ever-increasing numbers we may remember on All Saints' Day. Shall we be found in that blessed company beyond the dark valley, within the golden gate? It is *the* one question that throws every other into insignificance. Only may He who knoweth our necessities enable us in every changing scene, in the days of labour, in the hours of rest, when

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 21.



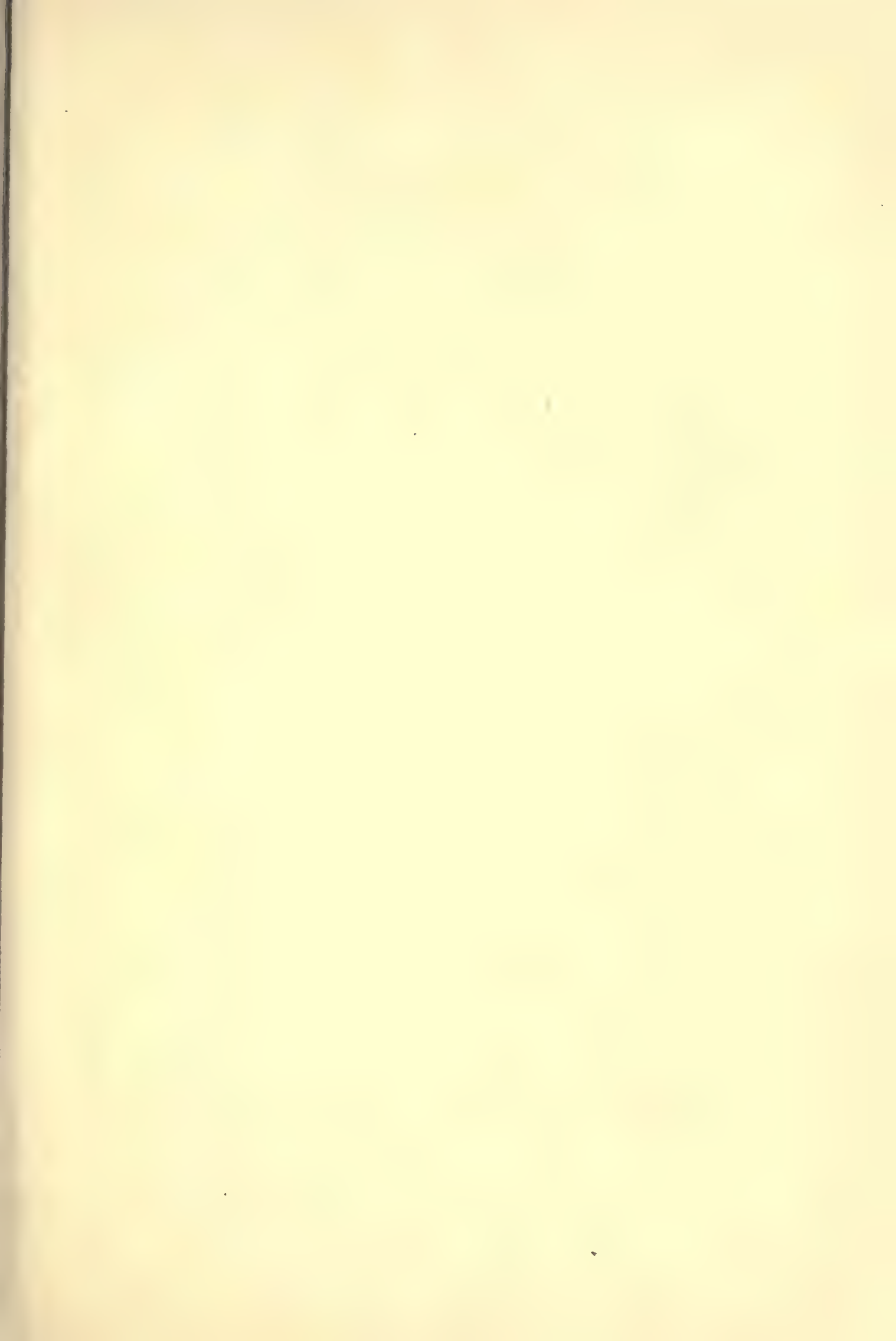
the sunshine glows on the landscape of life, when the shadows fall drearily, in joy and in sorrow, in trial and in triumph, in temptation and in rescue, in the upward struggling prayer, in the spreading of our unworthy record, the record of failure and of sin before the Presence in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, so to follow those who are gone 'with the sign of faith, and do now rest in the sleep of peace,' that we with them may have our portion in the coming of the Kingdom, 'the lot of the saints that lieth in the light.'

J. G. TETLEY, *Sermon*.

### *Collect.*

O Christ the Son of God, our great joy and everlasting gladness, who after their bitter sufferings dost vouchsafe to Thy saints the contemplation of Thy sweetness, so that pain and groaning have no more place among them : bestow now on us, though undeserving, the healing gift of comfort ; that we, who through our own fault have been far removed from Thee, may be gathered into the company of Thy saints, and with them attain to infinite gladness ; through Thy mercy, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God world without end. Amen.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects*.





HOW BEAUTIFUL  
IT IS TO BE ALIVE

## CHAPTER V.

### **Life.**

I sometimes feel that eternity will be too short to praise  
God in, if it was only for making us *live* at all !

C. KINGSLEY.

How beautiful it is to be alive !

To wake each morn as if the Maker's grace  
Did us afresh from nothingness derive

That we might sing ' How happy is our case !  
How beautiful it is to be alive ! '

To read in God's great Book, until we feel  
Love for the love that gave it ; then to kneel

Close unto Him whose truth our souls will thrive,  
While every moment's joy doth more reveal  
' How beautiful it is to be alive.'

Rather to go without what might increase

Our worldly standing, than our souls deprive  
Of frequent speech with God, or than to cease  
To feel, though having wasted health or peace,  
' How beautiful it is to be alive ! '

Not to forget, when pain and grief draw nigh,

Into the ocean of time past to dive  
For memories of God's mercies, or to try  
To bear all sweetly, hoping still to cry  
' How beautiful it is to be alive ! '

Thus ever towards man's height of nobleness  
 Strive still some new progression to contrive ;  
 Till, just as any other friend's, we press  
 Death's hand ; and, having died, feel none the less  
 ' How beautiful it is to be alive.' H. S. SUTTON.

### The Work of Life.

*A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. The life is more than meat and the body than raiment.—*  
 St. Luke xii. 15, 23.

*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—*  
 Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Of in my way have I stood still, though but a casual  
 passenger. So much I felt the awfulness of life.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THERE can be nothing more sobering than the truth that this life is a state of trial and preparation for another. . . . A serious person, as soon as life as a whole is placed before him, must say to himself, 'What is this life for? what is its object? what is its end?' When he asks these questions, and he is told that this life is a state of probation, out of which it is intended that he shall come fitted for another life which is to last for ever, that seems to him a satisfactory account of this life, it is a reason sufficient to explain it. . . . There is something in the different objects which start up in a man's course through this world which is distracting. So many things appear of importance, one advantage and another advantage ; they invite us to pursue them, and we are very apt to pursue them as if they were all in themselves of consummate consequence to us. . . . But the principle of trial as the end of life at once pushes aside all this multiplicity of irrelevant ends to make a way for the true one ; it reduces the purpose of life to the greatest possible simplicity—reduces it, as we may say, to a unit—to the effect upon the individual himself, what he does and how he turns out under these circumstances. The apparent outward ends are only



important as tests of him ; they constitute his ordeal, whether they tempt him to a blind pursuit of them, or whether he resists their mastery, and does not allow them to command him. The outward advantages, or disadvantages, of life, are the materials and the instruments of a great trial, which the Almighty conducts for the manifestation and proof of the individual ; that is the end. The manifold exhibition of apparent ends, which constitute and compose this world, is but the machinery for the production of this one real end. The idea of probation thus gives a singular unity to the whole design and plan of life. It throws the individual upon himself as the rationale of the whole.

It is not to be denied that persons have life conferred upon them for the good of others as well as for their own, inasmuch as the whole human race is one family, the several members of which are bound to do each other good. Nor is it to be denied that, over and above this general mission of love which belongs to all men, some may be charged with particular and more conspicuous services to mankind—with distinct undertakings for the good of the Church and society. But it must be remembered that, if this is the case, such special calls are a part at the same time of personal trial ; more than this, it must be noted that they come under and in subordination to personal trial as the main head of Divine design, in relation to the individual. His personal trial is the only object of life which is concerned with his own individual eternal interests.

In special undertakings and missions God makes use of us as instruments. His providence works by means of us as His instruments, and undoubtedly it enters within the scope even of our personal trial, acting well as such instruments. Still, if we view those capacities in which we act a part, it must be seen that what we do as instruments is a far inferior work to that which we do to fulfil our own personal trial. . . . We are not united to God simply by being used by Him as means : this is an office which belongs to good and bad alike. But in fulfilling the purpose of life as a sphere of trial and probation, we are God's servants in a different sense from that in which His

instruments are ; we are His servants by personal obedience, and by the agreement of our wills to His will. . . . The divine object may be answered, and the instrument who is used to accomplish it may be condemned, condemned even for the very spirit which he has shown while acting as such an instrument. The general end of life, as trial, is superior to all special ends, and it is thus superior because the general end is also the individual end. It is the end which concerns the individual being, his spiritual condition, his ultimate prospects. It contains the highest and grandest ends to him, the only ends that are of any moment to him ; it contains an eternal end—the reward of life everlasting.

J. B. MOZLEY, *Parochial and Occasional Sermons.*

### Prayer.

O Lord of all power and might, God of all spirits and of all flesh, that dwellest in the highest heavens ; and yet humblest Thyself to behold the lowly upon earth ; O Thou that triest the hearts and reins, and clearly discernest the hidden secrets of man, Uncreated Light, without beginning, without end, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning : do Thou, Eternal King, receive my prayers which I pour forth unto Thee from defiled lips, yet trusting in the multitude of Thy tender mercies. . . . Grant that with wakeful heart and watchful mind I may pass the whole night of this present life, ever looking for the dawn of the bright and shining day of Thy Only-begotten Son, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, when He shall come with glory as Judge on earth to reward every man according to his works. Grant that I may never be found slumbering nor slothful, but always wakeful and watchful in the work of His commandments. So may I be ready to enter into His joy and the heavenly bride-chamber of His glory, where, O my God, shall be the ceaseless song of guests, and the unspeakable joy of those who behold the ineffable glory of Thy Face. For Thou art the True Light, enlightening and sanctifying all things. Unto Thee doth all creation give praise for ever and ever. Amen.

S. BASIL, *From the Book of Private Prayer.*

## The Light of Life.

*The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*—Isaiah xl. 5.

*I am the Light of the World; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*—St. John viii. 12.

THE Life of Christ, the human Life of Christ, the ideal human life, is the final, the perfect revelation on earth of the Glory of God. But if that revelation is in one sense and essentially complete, in another sense it is still unfolded before us and unfolded by us. The Life of Christ, which consummated the ancient revelation through the Jewish people and the Jewish prophets, is now continued in the Church and in the believer. The Glory of the Lord—we dare not shrink from the confession—must still be revealed, and the Church and the believer are the organs of the revelation. ‘The Son of God hath come and hath given us understanding that we may know’—discern with growing intelligence—‘Him that is true.’<sup>1</sup> The revelation was first made through life, it is grasped through life, it is published through life. ‘The glory of God,’ said an early father, ‘is a living man, the life of man is the vision of God.’

That which was shown in Christ in all perfection without the least tinge of transitory colouring, without the least lack of abiding sympathy, we ‘who are but parts’ are charged to translate, as it were, through His help into forms of time and place. We ‘receive of His fulness grace for grace,’ and it is our office by this power to read and to interpret the thoughts and the needs of our own age, to grow from point to point, to live as men who believe that the Word became flesh, so that there is nothing truly human, however weak and perishable in present form, which is not capable of ministering to a Divine service; who believe that Jesus rose from the dead, so that there is nothing truly human, however limited and personal, which is not capable of spiritual transfiguration.

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John v. 20.

<sup>2</sup> St. John i. 16.

This is, we confess it with trembling hearts, an overpowering charge, but it is our charge, and He Who gave it will open the way to its accomplishment. To live is hard ; and there is not one of us, I fancy, who has not again and again been tempted to despair of life when he has dared to look upon its dark mysteries ; but, again, there is not one of us who has not found a great sorrow, a great disappointment, a great trial, an avenue to unexpected joy. It is when we take a mean view of things, when we rest upon the surface, when we isolate ourselves proudly or sadly from the great life in which we share and to which we contribute, when we make our present powers the standard of judgment, that hope fails. But let us once come to know that the sufferings of creation are travail-pains, that there is an eternal meaning and purpose in the evolution of being, that there is a communion of humanity through the Communion of Saints, that when we cannot see we can rest in Him Who is holiness and love—and all will be changed. The glory of the Lord will be revealed, His power and His long-suffering, using and bearing with His servants.

‘The Glory of God is a living man ; and the life of man is the vision of God !’ Yes : the life of a man and the life of a Church is the vision of God. Not always, nor all at once, is that sight given to us. Something at each moment is disclosed that effort may have its real foundation : something is withheld that effort may have its unfailing call. But in the Life of Christ, the Son of Man, the vision was full, absolute, uninterrupted. That Life remains for us ; and even when the light is clouded we can still look to the source whence it flows.

Can it mean less to us than that humiliation, loss, suffering is as a veil which time casts over the fulfilment of the Divine will ; that we shall find our battle won if we claim the fruits of victory ; that our life, our one life, is for each of us the opportunity for so learning as men to see God that we may hereafter bear the transforming splendour of His open face ?

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *The Revelation of the Father.*



**Prayer.**

Do Thou, the God of glory, the Father of glory, my God and my Father, accept the desire of a child who has seen that Thy glory is alone worth living for. O Lord, show me Thy glory. Let it overshadow me. Let it fill the temple of my heart. Let me dwell in it as revealed in Christ. And do Thou Thyself fulfil in me Thine own good pleasure, that Thy child should find his glory in seeking the glory of his Father. Amen.

A. MURRAY.



## CHAPTER VI.

### Immortality.

*God created man to be immortal, and made him an image of His own eternity.*—Wisdom ii. 23.

*To know Thee is perfect righteousness ; yea, to know Thy power is the root of immortality.*—Wisdom xv. 3.

*Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.*—2 Timothy i. 10.

It remained for the Eternal Word, when He took flesh in the mystery of the Incarnation, to bring the truth which He had taught mankind by the light He gave them,—which He had taught ancient Israel by law and prophets—it remained for Him, in the mystery of His humiliation, to bring this majestic truth of immortality into clear ‘light by the Gospel.’ The infallible authority of Jesus Christ, true God and Man, has guaranteed to His people for ever this glorious truth. The Eternal Word—the Revealer of the Father by the agency of the Holy Ghost—has brought into the clearness of distinct and definite revelation what was once only dimly and indistinctly known.

Our Lord revealed it *by His example*, by the manner in which He subordinated the claims of this present world to the thought of a life beyond ; He revealed it by the whole *tenor of His teaching*, the precepts of which require for their adequate fulfilment a life beyond the narrow boundary of time. He revealed it *by direct statement*—‘God is not the God of the dead, but of the living’ ;<sup>1</sup> the ‘many mansions’ ; ‘Abraham’s bosom’ ; the ‘coming again’ ; the ‘shining forth’<sup>2</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxii. 32.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 43.

righteous in their Father's kingdom ;—He revealed it,—and guaranteed the truth of His Godhead, and therefore His right to reveal,—by the stupendous miracle of the resurrection ; He carried on His revelation by His ascension into glory and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.

The Apostles one and all taught what he had revealed, and now 'the Holy Church throughout all the world,' however externally divided through human frailties, still as God's family proclaims with one living voice, in the Catholic Creeds : 'I believe in the resurrection of the body, the life everlasting—the life of the world to come.'

This, then, is the foundation of belief in the immortality of man. To mankind at large it rests on that universal teaching of God to His creature which may be called *intuition* ; to this, for the chosen people, was added the *revelation* of God in His unity, and man in his dignity and his sorrow, in his need of and nearness to God implied in the moral law ; to this has succeeded *the full revelation* of Christ to His Church, to be proclaimed throughout the world—the distinct and definite declaration of eternal life. To all the word is spoken, softer or more clearly, which proclaims the immortality of man—

The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an Eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's immortality ;  
Another race is run, and other palms are won.

But the 'sober colouring' becomes a golden glory to the eye of faith fixed on the revelation on the Incarnate God ; and the Christian's voice can rise with the strength of certainty in the triumphant cry of the great Apostle, 'Death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ?'<sup>1</sup>

W. J. KNOX-LITTLE, *Immortality, a Symposium*.<sup>2</sup>

The Christian hope of immortality cannot be an egotistic hope, because the affection does not centre upon an individual ;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 55.

<sup>2</sup> By permission of Messrs. J. Nisbet & Co.

it is in its very essence social : love enters into its very composition, and it looks forward to a communion of good as its very end and goal. Every one indeed can test the scope of this affection ; and even the deaths we read of, or those which only imagination pictures, bear witness to the same.

When anything beautiful in human character takes its departure from the world, what is the first ejaculation of the human heart but one for immortality? Can it perish?—the priceless treasure of this personal life. The survivor says, No ; such being must go on being. He pursues the sacred form through unimaginable worlds—even the bodily form ; for even the body is spiritual so far as it is a manifestation of the personal being ; and he feels that, though carried away and shrouded in the mist which encircles human existence, it is safe somewhere. Being, therefore, would find out being, the one left the one gone, drawn toward it by the current which penetrates all the spiritual creation, and the desire of immortality is as much for another as for oneself. It is not a selfish instinct, it is not a neutral one, it is a moral and generous one. The individual desires the immortality, the perpetuation, the regeneration, the ascent and the glory of that human society with which he finds himself connected now, and aspires after membership with the great community in its state of exaltation. Christianity knows nothing of a hope of immortality for the individual alone, but only of a glorious hope for the individual in the Body, in the eternal society of the Church triumphant.

J. B. MOZLEY, *University Sermons.*

### Collect.

I lift up my heart unto Thee, O Lord, I bless Thee, I worship Thee, and praise Thee, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor, the Lord and Father, the King and God of all, the Fountain of Life and Immortality, the Treasury of eternal good things ; Whom the heavens, and the heavens of heavens, the angels and all the celestial powers, sing praise unto incessantly, crying one to another ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of

Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.'  
Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place : blessed be  
Thou, my God, my Strength and my Stay, my Refuge and  
Deliverer, my Helper and my Defender. Amen.

BISHOP ANDREWES.

If clear-eyed Science bids us not forget  
That by the Past the Present still is shaped,  
And never a created being yet  
From the stern clutch of circumstance escaped,  
God's sons, we would not with His will contend,  
Nor strip one blossom from Truth's sacred stalk,  
Content that He who hath designed our end  
Hath marked the limits within which we walk.  
'Tis Thus we learn that man is really one,  
Spite of the temporal severance of the flesh,  
And every action by a brother done  
Lives in each action of our own afresh ;  
For the fine vesture of our life clings whole,  
Throughout the ages, round this sunlit ball,  
A radiant thread for every single soul,  
And love the final pattern of it all.  
And Christ, self-chosen as our manhood's Head,  
And wearing blamelessly our manhood's crown,  
Could suffer in our erring manhood's stead,  
And bring the fulness of Redemption down.  
So blessing still in seeming bane doth lurk  
For the true hearts that thrill to the Above,  
And all things that are God's together work  
For good—eternal good—to those that love.

Thus man redeemed grows into man more kind ;  
Love's central splendour radiates to his heart :  
Were death the end, our lives were lame and blind  
And, stumbling, recked not of a brother's smart.  
Yea ; were these lives, whose blading is so fair,  
To find no other earring than in blight—



Swelling the waste-heap of a world's despair—  
E'en love itself would darken into night ;  
For men grown sick of glimmering lives that seem  
The flutter of a gnat against the sky,  
Would shoot no more their tissue with love's gleam,  
And cruel live because they hopeless die.  
But now the farther life the nearer lifts  
Into great glory; and, though clouds may roll,  
The heart grows quick to love; for, through the rifts,  
It glimpses love eternal as its goal.

Again; doth Science, ranging wider, teach  
That every graded life unceasing yearns  
A nobler height of sentience to reach,  
Quick with an impulse that contentment spurns?  
Be it so; such impulse needs must have a goal,  
Whereto at length creation may arrive;  
It cannot be that all things aimless roll  
In a mere race to keep the best alive.  
What doth this yearning, onwards, upwards, mean,  
Whereto this further-feeling instinct tend,  
Unless in the great world of the unseen  
It meet at last with its predestined end?  
E'en as the blood that, leaping from the heart,  
Its aim achieved, returns through coursing vein,  
So tends the life that once from God did start  
Through cycling centuries to God again;  
And of the myriad seen and unseen links  
In the vast chain, that girds Omnipotence  
And binds together the high power that thinks  
With the low life of some mere creeping sense,  
The golden link, which lacking, all were dross,  
And a great void remained for evermore,  
Is that Incarnate Form upon the Cross  
Whose radiant Godhead our weak manhood wore;  
For there in union consecrate, complete—  
A wedding of two worlds in love divine—



The earthly and the heavenly smiling meet,  
Re-knitting life's else torn and ravelled line.  
And now, from the eternal's highest height  
Down to the depth in all its darkest coigns,  
God ever gracious, thrills with rare delight  
The life that, through His Son, His own life joins.

A. EUBULE-EVANS, *Through Dark to Light*.

### Self-realisation.

A MAN can live for days, and months, and years, without ever giving any reality or force to the knowledge that he is himself an immortal soul ; without ever really feeling his essential separation from things visible, his independence of them, his distinct existence in himself, his power of acting for himself in this way or in that, his personal responsibility for his every choice and action. . . . It may at last be simply inconceivable to him that a day will come when all this moving mass of life and change around him will fall away from him as a dream when one awaketh, and leave in the bare and hard reality of its eternal being that solitary self which he has so long neglected and forgotten. For of course our forgetfulness cannot really change or dissipate the self, the soul which God has made us ; we cannot undo or reverse that miracle by which He first called man out of the ranks of all creation, and gave to him alone the gift of consciousness, that he should no longer ' nourish a blind life within the brain,' but should know himself, the world, and God ; personality may be neglected or forgotten or denied ; it can never, we may be quite sure, through all eternity, be alienated or annulled. Whatever mists and clouds we gather round it, it remains, and waits till death shall take them all away ; till, in the world where truths cannot be masked, we stand, our very selves, and hear a voice from which we can no more escape—' Be still, and know that I am God.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlv. 10.

We can never cancel the act whereby man became a living soul ; we can never cease to be ourselves. . . . In proportion as the consciousness of our personal and separate being grows clear and strong within us, we shall be able to enter more readily and more deeply into the Christian doctrine of our immortality ; we shall be better judges of the evidence for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come : for it is as personal spirits that we shall rise again with our bodies and give account for our own works. . . . There is a conviction of our immortality bound up with the exercise of self-conscious thought and self-determined will ; whatever difficulty we may at first find in regard to the resurrection of the body, there is surely at least as much in conceiving how a personal spirit could ever cease to be. . . . It is the steadfast self-realisation of a personal spirit which gives the true sanctity to this life, and reaches with irresistible confidence beyond the death wherein it hardly seems to die. In that which each one of us means, or should mean, when he says 'I,' there is already latent the prophecy of a personal immortality, and the assurance that though worms destroy this body, 'yet in my flesh shall I see God ; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.'<sup>1</sup>

It is when we recall ourselves from the scattered activity of our daily life ; it is either when we have courage to go apart and stand alone and hear what the Lord God will say concerning us, or else when sickness or age has forced us into the solitude which we have always shunned : it is then that we know ourselves, and our need of a sufficient object in which the life of the soul may find its rest for ever. As one after another the interests of this world are removed ; as we begin to see that our work is not an adequate or life-long scope for all we are, as the friends whom God has given us go before us into death, and one by one the channels of our love are closed ; we may feel at last that deep, mysterious energy of the soul which must be set towards another Spiritual Being like itself ;

<sup>1</sup> Job xix. 26.

and so we may prepare ourselves to listen with a new sense of hope and adoration, when

Through the thunder comes a human Voice,  
Saying, O heart I made, a heart beats here,  
Thou hast no power, nor mayest conceive of Mine ;  
But love I gave thee, with Myself to love,  
And thou must love Me Who have died for thee.<sup>1</sup>

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties for Belief and Disbelief*.

The immortal soul is self-conscious. It is conscious too of universal life, and of its own place in it. . . . It is satisfied with the knowledge of the fact of mystery, as that without which eternity would be an idle void. It listens to the echoes of a distant past. It has never let go the hand of God. It sees and hears His guiding spirit in the trial sphere of human life. It knows His footsteps ; it sees His light ; it traces Him in the excellence and beauty of the universe, for all Nature is His parable.

Whence in our nature does that throb of sympathy arise that answers to the call of the spirit of beauty and truth ? That power is ours, but it comes of too long an ancestry to be traceable only among the surroundings of present life. But are we left to that alone ? Are love, thought, and memory bounded by its limits ? Have hope and terror no history beyond the annals of humanity ? Has the majesty of philosophy, the pride of knowledge, the reign of sense, ever satisfied mankind ?

What is the secret of that power that holds the mind enthralled as the after-glow of sunset fills the eyes ? Whence comes that sense of rest and yet of longing, lingering desire as the sight loses itself in that ocean of light ? Why no sense of solitude in those awful depths ; no fear, but only joy in that sublime infinitude ? Why ? but for the conscious presence of

<sup>1</sup> R. Browning.

more there than sight perceives. That glorious sheen of light and colour is but the clothing of a sphere of life into which we pierce and find no strangeness in it. Its fascination is not that of novelty, but of reminiscence. We are no more alone : a sense of relationship to all that sphere contains invites onward, as to a home once known and long since left, but not forgotten—another, but a true sphere of life—a spiritual scenery reflected from heaven's mirror. Thus does sublimity of external effect, which only art's deepest poetry can recall, stir in the affections of the human breast the echoes of life beyond the horizon of our sight—a life not lost, but, like the sunset, sunk beneath the shadows of a distant past, shrouded from sight and interrupted for a while, as though to test fidelity—a life once ours, ours still, and ours for ever : no dream, but the conscious reality of the silent soul.

T. GAMBIER PARRY, *The Ministry of Fine Art.*

For ever and for ever

The changeless oceans roar ;  
And dash their thundering surges down  
Upon the sounding shore :  
Yet this swift soul, this lightning will,  
Shall these, while they roll on, be still ?

For ever and for ever

The eternal mountains rise,  
And lift their virgin snows on high  
To meet the silent skies.  
Yet shall this soul which measures all,  
While these stand steadfast, sink and fall ?

For ever and for ever

The swift suns roll through space ;  
From age to age they wax and wane,  
Each in its ordered place :  
Yet shall this soul, whose inner eye  
Foretells their cycles, fade and die ?

For ever and for ever  
We have been, and we are,  
Unchanging as the ocean wave,  
Unresting as the star :  
Though suns stand still, and time be o'er,  
We are, and shall be, evermore.

LEWIS MORRIS, *Songs of Two Worlds.*



## CHAPTER VII.

### Eternal Life.

*God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—St. John iii. 16.*

*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.—St. John x. 10.*

Do not let us think that eternal life is *yet to begin* for us. It began at our Baptism. It began, consciously, the very first moment we realised what it was to believe in God, to serve Him, and to pray to Him. It is going on now. Do not let us think that there is a hard-and-fast line drawn by death—what we call death—and that we are on one side of it and all the saints of God on the other.

We *are* in eternal life now. We can only forfeit it by our own fault. We have got our feet on the lowest grades of the heavenly staircase that reaches up to the very throne of God. How this thought should ennoble our daily life and work ! How it should make us shrink from everything deadly and corrupt ! . . .

It is because our lives are Godward that they are eternal.

ELIZABETH WORDSWORTH, *Illustrations of the Creed.*

What is life ? Life is none other, according to the Scripture, than God Himself, Jesus Christ our Lord, who bestows on man His own Spirit, to form in him His own character, which is the character of God.

He is the one Eternal Life ; and it has been manifested in human form, that human beings might copy it ; and behold, it was full of grace and truth.

The Life of grace and truth ; that is, the life of Christ, and therefore the Life of God.

The Life of grace—of graciousness, love, pity, generosity, usefulness, self-sacrifice ; the Life of truth—of faithfulness, fairness, justice, the desire to impart knowledge, and to guide men into all truth. The Life, in one word, of charity, which is both grace and truth, both love and justice, in one Eternal essence. That is the life which God lives for ever in heaven. That is the one Eternal Life, which must be also the Life of God. For, as there is but one Eternal, even God, so is there but one Eternal Life, which is the life of God and of His Christ. And the Spirit by which it is inspired into the hearts of men is the Spirit of God, who proceedeth alike from the Father and from the Son.

Have you not seen men and women in whom these words have been literally and palpably fulfilled? Have you not seen those who, though old in years, were so young in heart that they seemed to have drunk of the Fountain of perpetual youth,—in whom, though the outward body decayed, the soul was renewed day by day ; who kept fresh and pure the noblest and holiest instincts of their childhood, and went on adding to the experience, the calm, the charity of age? Persons whose eye was still so bright, whose smile was still so tender, that it seemed that they could never die? and when they died, or seemed to die, you felt that *they* were not dead, but only their husk and shell ; that they themselves, the character which you had loved and revered, must endure on, beyond the grave, beyond the worlds, in a literally Everlasting Life, independent of nature, and of all the changes of the material universe.

Surely you have seen such. And surely what you loved in them was the Spirit of God Himself,—that love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, which the natural savage man has not. Has not, I say, look at him where you will, from the Tropics to the Pole, because it is a gift above man ; the gift of the Spirit of God ; the Eternal Life of Goodness, which natural birth cannot give to man, nor natural death take away.

You have surely seen such persons, and, if you have seen

them, did you not see this? That it was not riches which gave them this Life, if they were rich; or intellect, if they were clever; or science, if they were learned; or rank, if they were cultivated; or bodily organisation, if they were beautiful or strong: that this noble and gentle life of theirs was independent of their body, of their mind, of their circumstances? Nay, have you not seen this,—that not many rich, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but that God's strength is rather made perfect in man's weakness,—that in lonely sick beds, in dark places of the earth, you find ignorant people, sickly people, ugly people, stupid people, in spite of, in defiance of every opposing circumstance, leading heroic lives—a blessing, a comfort, an example, a very Fount of Life to all around them; and dying heroic deaths, because they know they have Eternal Life?

And what was that which had made them different from the beings around them? This at least. That they were of those of whom it is written, 'Let him that is athirst come.' They had been athirst for Life. They had had instincts and longings, very simple and humble, but very pure and noble. At times, it may be, they had been unfaithful to those instincts, at times, it may be, they had fallen. But the thirst after the noble Life was too deep to be quenched. It endured and it conquered, and they became more and more true to it, till it was satisfied at last, though never quenched, that thirst of theirs, in Him who alone can satisfy it—the God who gave it; for in them were fulfilled the Lord's own words, 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.'

CHARLES KINGSLEY, *The Water of Life*.

### Collect.

O Almighty God, Whom truly to know is everlasting life; grant us so perfectly to know thy Son Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that, following the steps of Thy holy Apostles, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Collect for SS. Philip and James's Day.*

## Christ our Life.

O Christ, our King ! the King and Son of Mary,  
 Our Champion, Saviour, Brother, Priest and Friend ;  
 Teach Thou each yearning throb of hero worship  
 How to pass on to Thee, as its true end ;  
 Let every gleam of light that charms our eyes  
 Lead us to Thee, from whom it took its rise.

Over these hearts, so prone to harbour idols,  
 Let the o'ershadowing grace for ever stream,  
 Until the Son has been revealed within us  
 Our hope of glory, and its fairest dream ;  
 Until we know Thee, not by angel's tongue,  
 But as our Lord of life, Whom we shall see ere long.

C. M. NOEL.

## The Living Bread.

*I am the Bread of Life. . . . This is the Bread which came down out of Heaven : not as the fathers did eat, and died : he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.*—St. John vi. 35, 58, R. V.

THE Lord declares that it is through His coming and through fellowship with Him that men can live. He discloses through and in Himself the fact of life, the food by which life is supported, the personal appropriation of the true spiritual food.

. . . This revelation of Christ as the giver of life meets an inherent want of the human soul. There is no one who does not feel the reality of the higher life when it is thus brought upon him. We know that our multitudinous actions and words cannot rightly be judged by any outward standard ; but that there is something in the doing and saying, independent of the mere outward accidents, which gives to them an abiding character.

We are conscious within ourselves of some vague looking to and longing for a Divine fellowship. We cannot realise death, even when all around reminds us of our mortality. We



have powers which find no adequate exercise, desires which find no lasting satisfaction, plans which find no ripe fulfilment. Business and care and pleasure drown the soft voices of the soul, which are ever speaking of all these things ; but from time to time, in those spaces of silence which come from God, they make themselves heard. At such seasons perhaps we are perplexed by feeling how much that is corruptible is mixed up with our true selves. We compare what we are to what we might have been, with what we aspire to be, and our hearts fail us. But 'God is greater than our hearts,'<sup>1</sup> and when our doubts are sorest, as Christians we can turn with joy to the thought of our incorporation with Christ. Then we shall know how the Divine assurance that we are 'members of Christ,' answers the fleeting and yet importunate aspirations which witness within us to an eternal life, to a life beyond time and above it, to a life not future and distant but even now present and active, to a life which includes the possibility of perfect communion with God and man.<sup>2</sup>

Eternal life, then, is a reality, and it is within the reach of each one of us. But this life, of which our earthly sensible life is the veil or the shadow, needs its proper nourishment. It cannot continue apart from that which is its source and its support. The true living self, like our living bodies, needs for its support that which is of a nature corresponding with it. Man cannot feed on stones, in respect to his outward frame. His body may be built out of the elements which they contain, but he needs that the elements which he appropriates should already have been prepared for him by a vital force. So too it is with his higher life. This also requires sustenance like to itself, and that not in one respect only, but in all, covering even now, so far as we can apprehend it, the sum of our human capacities and powers. Spiritual sustenance cannot be effective in an abstract form, as pure Truth ; it must come to us through the energy of a spiritual life.

The words which immediately follow the first announcement of Christ, 'I am the bread of life,' show how this necessity

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John iii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 St. John i. 3.



is recognised and met in His teaching. 'I am,' He says, 'the bread of life : He that cometh to Me shall never [in no wise] hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never [in no wise] thirst.'

So it is that man's spiritual food, which is Christ Himself, answers to the varied wants of his higher life ; and this it does as being, not only a source of life, but also endowed with life. For Christ, as we must notice, uses two phrases in this chapter when He speaks of Himself generally as man's spiritual food. 'I am,' He says, 'the bread of life';<sup>1</sup> and yet more than this, 'I am the living bread.'<sup>2</sup> I give, that is, what I have inherently ; I communicate life because I live. Not by any arbitrary exercise of power, not by any external fiat of omnipotence, but by the impartment of Myself, my Living Self, I sustain the living man. 'Because I live,' such is the promise elsewhere, 'ye shall live also.'<sup>3</sup> Even in this loftiest region of being, there is no interruption of the supreme unity of the Divine law, that life comes from life.

The *flesh* of Christ is His true Humanity. This He assumed for us ; this He gave for us as our complete ransom ; this He gives to us as our adequate sustenance. Christ offers us His humanity as the redemption, the support, the transfiguration of our humanity. Through Christ's manhood we are brought into union with Christ, who is God and Man, and in virtue of our fellowship with Him His promise will be fulfilled in us, and He will 'raise us up'—such is the four-times-repeated burden of the discourse—'He will raise us up, perfect men, even as He is perfect Man, in the last day.'<sup>4</sup>

No words of the preacher can add to the solemnity of this revelation of eternal life, and of Christ the food of eternal life, on which I have touched. . . The chapter is one for prayer, and not for controversy. But I do believe that every word will grow luminous if read in the light of Heaven. The Spirit will teach

<sup>1</sup> Verse 35.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 51.

<sup>3</sup> St. John xiv. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Verses 39, 40, 44, 54.

us in these latter days to understand aright what He brought to the remembrance of St. John in his Ephesian exile.

He will teach us to know that, beneath all that is poor and fleeting and imperfect in our visible life, there is a principle of eternal life by which we, through the infinite grace of God, can claim fellowship with Him. He will teach us that the one only support of this life is Christ Himself, truly God and truly man, who took our nature and bore our sin that we may be one with Him, and in Him bear the transforming splendour of the open vision of God. He will teach us that the Holy Communion is no strange exceptional service, but in very deed the lively image of our Christian life, and the lively pledge that the fulness of that life is possible for us by participation in Him Who is life. He will teach us by worthier and more sustained resolves, by simpler and tenderer devotion, by more absolute self-forgetfulness, by more vital recognition of Christ's Presence with us and in us, to come to know with more certain assurance and more complete surrender all that lies between the beginning and the end of faith: 'I am the bread of life. . . . He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.'

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *The Revelation of the Father.*

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Time and Eternity.

*Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise ;  
redeeming the time.*—Eph. v. 15, R. V.

THE period of earthly life and work lies like an island in the midst of a greater sea of being, the island of time in the ocean of a timeless eternity.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Seek to make that your own which has the stamp of God, and therefore the stamp of eternity upon it.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Let us so live that our earthly course may run on into eternity and be itself eternal.

H. E. MANNING.

Not in what has been, is, or is to be,  
The wise soul lives, but in a wider time,  
Which is not any, but contains the three !

LEWIS MORRIS, *Songs of Two Worlds.*

*We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which  
are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things  
which are not seen are eternal.*—2 Cor. iv. 18.

To speak of eternity as a guide in life appears, indeed, to some men to be merely dealing in 'transcendental crotchets.' What is called 'the practical mind' of the age shrinks from such impractical facts. 'Truths,' indeed, 'are only true for those

who have *some* understanding of them.' But there is *one* fact of which surely all have 'some understanding,' and which gives a practical colour to the thoughts of eternity. Do what we will, look where we may, we are all of us confronted by the serious, the certain fact of death. It is surely impossible for the mind altogether to abandon *some* speculation on what it may be doing and where it may be, after the lapse of, at most, a few short years. 'The things which are seen are temporal.' 'Yes, indeed; fair as sunset on the summer sea, fair as sweet faces in a quiet home, and pleasant hours in resting converse with our friends. One thing is certain: these must end; certainly we must die. Is it not the part of Common sense, in view of that coming certainty, to keep the eye on the vision of eternity?'

For the Christian this question is settled by Christ. He has thrown the light of His Word and His character on the important question of a life beyond the grave. It is not so much that our blessed Master taught directly about eternity, but that He lived *a life* most beautiful, most attractive, which on any other hypothesis than that of an eternal world was unquestionable madness; and also that in all His *teachings*, principles were implied or enunciated to work out which demanded eternity. Turn out the thought of eternity, with all its beauty and its awfulness, from the mind, and the teachings and life of Christ become unintelligible mistakes. Include the thought of eternity and you have religion in its truest sense. You have a religion taking serious account of the inner relation with God; a religion which colours, influences, guides, the most secret actions of time with a pervading sense of eternity.

This religion creates *that* character and life which, under whatever varying phases of civilisation, is the character loved and encouraged by Christ. For, indeed, He surely encouraged that class of mind which is *widely* practical, which takes account of its whole life, not merely of a part; which never forgets the nearness and certainty of another world. The light of His life shows to all who have eyes to see the need of earnestness, the possibility and beauty of eager and serious



thoughts of God, the beauty and straightforwardness of temper which is sure to be theirs from whose minds the stimulating power of death and eternity is never far away.

Little reckon they of the disturbance of time who gaze on eternity. These are they who can be practical yet contemplative, humble yet vigorous, self-forgetting yet full of resource ; who can be bright yet serious, grave yet full of sunshine, large in view, yet willing and wisely loyal to the claims of life's details of duty ; who do not fail in sympathy for others' trials, because they deeply feel their own responsibility ; whose repentances are deeper, quicker, more lasting than their faults ; who *grow* in the power of spiritual apprehension, and gain ground in the exercise of a disciplined life ; who have 'songs in the night,' and sunlight on the darkest day ; who draw gentleness from the springs of laughter, and sweetness from the fountain of tears. These are they for whom the grave may, indeed, have sadness, but over whom it cannot assert a sway of unconquerable gloom ; for whom life is filled with ever-advancing experiences of blessedness, and for whom death the destroyer has lost the power to dismay.

Let us live for eternity. Let us look more steadily and constantly *through* what appears, to what shall always be. Blessed are ye, immeasurably blessed, if ye have grace in a world of shadows to fix your eyes on the vision of eternity.

Time and Eternity ! We cannot name them without anxious questions rising at once to our lips. What is Time ? Is it a mere 'phantom of succession' ? Is it a subjective sensation ? Is it a fact external to the mind ? What is Eternity ? Is it a mere extension of time ? Is it, in fact, time without a *terminus ad quem*, or is it 'life fully possessed,' consciously possessed, by a living intelligence ? We do not know. Such questions altogether baffle and perplex us ; but, creatures as we are certainly of two worlds, such questions will not leave us when once we awake to think at all ; for, do what we will, we cannot but feel that these truths, however mysterious,



are truths—that these words represent something marvellous, inscrutable, but significant.

Has not the soul in view, as a practical reality, an unbounded and unimagined future? Sometimes it seems like a dream, sometimes very awfully near the present; but it is always a certainty, though always beyond the reach of exact knowledge. Think what it will be to us creatures of sense, children of time, victims of custom, slaves of habit, to live in conditions where these are utterly swept away! Think how blessed if there be to us places and conditions where all that has been best and most beautiful, truest and most pure, all that is loftiest and most elevating, without danger of the depressing influence of sloth, without fear of our low views and earthly tendencies, shall be ours irrevocably and for ever! In sin or worldliness well may we fear a future in which this miserable self, from whose thralldom we long to escape, might be stereotyped for ever; but in penitence, in efforts towards true life in our better moments and higher hours, how stimulating, how consoling, how elevating, to feel sure that what is good and blessed and true, high and tender affections, noble resolves, holy purposes,—that these have their true power in an eternal future, and that that future is ours!

In proportion as we throw ourselves forward into that future, so our capacity for all that is most worthy enlarges. To live with an eye on the future is to make the present rich in action, and to free it from the paralysing effects of cowardice or fear. The human soul exiled from its natural home must lift its eyes above the mountains and see the morning dawn. 'We are looking, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

It is just when we link high thoughts with common duties that we are most truly Christians. It is just when the soul learns some devotion to Him Who is the Meeting-point of time and eternity, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the

End, our God and Brother—just when it strains the eye of longing and contemplative hope to the things of eternity, and then turns its hand to the rude and common duties of daily life, and the exercise of practical virtue, of purity, kindness, justice, considerateness, truth—that our work is done best, and our spiritual life grows most truly, and our probation is best fulfilled, and men are helped and God is glorified, and we rise to the true dignity of our being and are more like true followers of the Crucified, and ‘walk in the Light of Life.’

We must do common things with a simple heart and high intentions. We must step boldly through the night with our eyes on the morning. This is the life of faith; this is the foundation of a Christian character; this is following Jesus; this is guiding the path of our progress by ‘the Light of Life.’

There is nothing overstrained or unreal in trying to carry the vision of eternity constantly into the duties of daily life. For death is real, and the eternal world is a serious certainty, and each of us has but one life to live, and one death to die, and the consequences of our actions—for the soul is one and indivisible and individual—dog our every step, and follow us most certainly across the grave. Great saints, of course, are there who have done this perfectly; but great saints are only high examples of a life the principles of which are the same for us all. There is only one path for all towards growth as towards perfection, and that is the path in time illuminated by a temper of eternity, and tracked out for us all by Christ.

The waves of eternity beat upon the shores of time. Cold and cruel they seem to be, telling only of an engulfing grave. Cross them with the wings of a spirit buoyed up on heavenly hope and childlike confidence, and you find there is an eternal country, which, when you must be driven from this little scene of your life's struggle, will make you an eternal home.

A few more years; a few more struggles; a few more sorrows, toils, and tears; a few more efforts to do our duty; a few more acts of penitence for sin; a few more grey

hairs ; a few more scattered hopes, blown like the leaves of autumn before the gathering gale ; a few more hours of prayer and days of labour, and stormy mornings of work or apprehension, and sunny evenings of love and peace ; and you and I will be gone—gone with no trace behind us, except such as has been marked by our temper of eternity ; gone, with the consequence of our short and troubled struggle following us, but bathed, as we trust, through the mercy of Him who loves us—bathed in the precious Blood.

O Christ of pity, King of eternity, Man once suffering in time ! give us grace, by Thine unending merit, to live as those have lived before us in view of an eternal destiny, with the spirit and purpose of Thy children born for the land where Thou livest, where sin and death are dead !

W. J. KNOX-LITTLE, *The Light of Life*.

### Collect.

O God, the protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy ; Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy ; that, Thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal : Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

*Fourth Sunday after Trinity.*

## CHAPTER IX.

### Liberty.

*The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Rom. viii. 20, 21.*

THE creature was subjected to vanity, says the Apostle, in hope *that* itself, the creation—the seemingly hopeless creation—shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In these consolatory words the point of real and startling importance is the close bond that connects man with the material world, especially in relation of *time*. With man's sin came at once the curse that fell upon the earth ; confusion and discord began at once to work amid the tendencies of created things. And even so shall it be in the restitution.

The earnest expectation of the creature waits for no doubtful or chimerical future, for no ill-defined or uncertain hour of emancipation ; it waits, as the Spirit of God here infallibly declares, for no less a sure and certain epoch than that of the manifestation of the sons of God. The restoration of man and the world will be as contemporaneous as their first bondage and subjection. When the number of the elect is complete, when the last of the mystical one hundred and forty and four thousand shall receive the Seal of God on his forehead,<sup>1</sup> when the last drop shall be added to the brimming cup of the afflictions of Christ, the last tear shed, the last sigh breathed

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vii. 4.



into the air, the glorification of the creature will have fully commenced, the sunlight of the unclouded presence of God will again irradiate His works, the weary night of creation will at length have passed, the long-looked-for dawn at last come. And now all are longing and all are tarrying, bound together by the affinities of a common spiritual principle, united in ruin, yet still united in hope. While faith, in the form of belief to the Christian, and dim intuitions to the heathen, is the prerogative of the rational creature, *hope* is the gift that has not been denied to the irrational creation. Hope is common to all; hope binds nature and mankind in a close and enduring union.

And so now all are waiting. The Church is waiting; the souls under the altar are waiting;<sup>1</sup> the kindreds of the earth are waiting; the world of animate things is waiting; the whole realm of inanimate nature is waiting; yea, more, as the next verse discloses, waiting in self-acknowledged suffering, groaning and travailing, conscious of a common captivity and a common ruin. Not only we ourselves, the Apostle tells us, the rational and accountable creatures of God's hand,—not only we, that smaller company who have the first fruits of the Spirit,<sup>2</sup> groan within ourselves, struggling for freedom from vanity and corruption,—not only we, the chosen ones, are thus longing and travailing, but with us all creation is blended in that never-quenched aspiration. All the sufferings of the wide-spread domains of nature form a part of that earnest and mournful cry. . . . All serve to call forth the deep longing for the hour when man, the masterpiece of God's works, shall be clothed with incorruption, when nature shall be restored, and the apocalyptic vision of the Apostle shall be a mighty and living reality: 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.'<sup>3</sup>

Though the old creation is marred and ruined, yet the new creation has already begun. It was ratified on our

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. viii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 1.

Master's cross. It was commenced in His resurrection. It has become developed by baptism in His name ; His Church is its first fruits ; His grace, its moving principle ; His love, the mystery of its evolution.

And that love is pervading all things. Yes, why should we fear to say it? Not only the inward and spiritual, but the outward and material world. Though we may not be able to distinctly recognise all its plastic powers,—though we ourselves may at times doubt our own hopes,—yet, if we have eyes to see and hearts to believe, we may still feel some present loosening of the chain that binds all things to the law of vanity and corruption. We may trace alleviations of suffering in many things around us, often in strange and unlooked-for ways ; sometimes by incidental discoveries, sometimes by more deliberate applications of the great laws of nature. . . . There are commencements everywhere. Though we may not see more than mere beginnings and initial movements, though our eyes may fall on sleep before the lights of the coming day have appeared above the still clouded horizon, yet in patience and hope let us possess our souls ; let us quit ourselves like men in the hourly struggle with sin, and remember that every triumph over a temptation in our Redeemer's name, every victory over a warring lust in the power of the Spirit, is an unwinding of a chain of the bondage of vanity, is an act in the emancipation of a world.

God our Creator calls on us to be holy ; He has called us, as He Himself says by the mouth of His Apostle, not to selfishness, not to uncleanness, but to holiness.<sup>1</sup> God our Redeemer calls on us to follow the steps of His pure and holy life. God the Sanctifier pleads with our hearts, and with groans that tongue cannot tell calls on us to fulfil our Maker's will—His will, even our sanctification.<sup>2</sup> Our suffering brethren call upon us. Yea, and all Nature mutely joins in that never-ceasing appeal ; the animals that gaze strangely and wistfully in our faces ; the short-lived and fading loveliness of all things around us,—all are calling on us, consciously or unconsciously, not to

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 3.

put back the hour of their restitution, not to delay the coming of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. . . .

May every soul among us be moved to do his part in a world's restoration ; that so, when the Great Restorer's feet shall stand on Olivet, in that mystic day 'when it shall be neither clear nor dark, but in the evening time it shall be light,'<sup>1</sup> we may be numbered with His faithful ones who have borne the heat and burden of the day,—and to whom there remaineth rest for evermore.      BISHOP ELLICOTT, *The Destiny of the Creature*.

### Sonnet.

What are we set on earth for? Say, to toil ;  
Nor seek to leave thy tending of the vines  
For all the heat o' the day, till it declines,  
And Death's mild curfew shall from work assoil.  
God did anoint thee with His odorous oil,  
To wrestle, not to reign ; and He assigns  
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,  
For younger fellow-workers of the soil  
To wear for amulets. So others shall  
Take patience, labour, to their heart and hand,  
From thy hand and thy heart and thy brave cheer,  
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.  
The least flower, with a brimming cup may stand,  
And share its dew-drop with another near.

E. B. BROWNING.

### Collect.

Almighty God, Who hast given us Thy Only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a pure Virgin : Grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit ; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

*Christmas Day.*

<sup>1</sup> Zec. xiv. 6, 7.

## Freedom through Christ.

*If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.—St. John viii. 30, 31.*

*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.—2 Cor. v. 17, 18.*

OUR freedom is born out of what God in Christ does for us, and His action does not, therefore, take the place of ours, nor do instead of ours. Nay, His action on our behalf shows itself in us in the shape of our own free activity on our own behalf. Out of His action we are made free, and the more He does for us, the more we are enabled to do for ourselves.

H. S. HOLLAND, *Creed and Character.*

*Now therefore thou art no more a servant, but a son. And because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.—Gal. iv. 7 ; v. 1.*

THIS is how St. Paul greets us as we turn to ask for freedom in the Church of Jesus Christ. It is no base counterfeit that he offers us, but the upward freedom, the freedom from above, the freedom for which the Psalmist cried from the depth of a suffering heart, 'Oh, that I had wings like a dove ! for then would I fly away and be at rest,'<sup>1</sup> and which the King of Kings brought with Him when He said, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'<sup>2</sup> 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'<sup>3</sup> It is a freedom from the power of temptation and the stinging poison of sin, freedom from the sway of unruly passions and tempers and appetites, freedom from the helplessness of unmanly lives and ways of self-indulgence, freedom from selfishness and meanness and littleness of mind, freedom from the oppression of artificial wants, freedom from suspiciousness of one another, freedom from the care of an unsatisfied conscience and the remorse of unforgiven sin, freedom from irksomeness in religious services :

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lv. 6.

St. Matt. xi. 28.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. v. 8



for only let it have play, and it will banish all sense of bondage from religious duties and observances in the radiant sunshine of a holy joy ; above all, it is a freedom to pray and praise, and do noble deeds for God, and learn the joy of self-sacrifice in a daily life of 'faith working by love.' Yes, that is freedom indeed, which lifts, not the thought or the will alone, but the man's life itself up nearer and nearer to God.

Do you ask, how is such freedom to be apprehended ? Where are the wings that will bear us up from earth to Heaven, all heavy and earthy as we are ? Oh ! there at your feet, if you will but trust yourself to mount upon them. 'Brethren, now are we the sons of God,'<sup>1</sup> says St. John. 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,'<sup>2</sup> says St. Paul. 'O stablish me with Thy free Spirit,'<sup>3</sup> the Psalmist has taught us to pray. How shall He lead you, how shall He stablish you, but in His own sweet way of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ? How shall he make you know that you are the sons of God but by teaching you to live as the sons of God ? Make God's will to be more and more your will. That will be an exercise of freedom. Say to yourselves, 'I am born of God : I will not, cannot sin, for I am the child of God.' Grow up into the life of God, at peace with God, wrapped up in God, lost in God ; and as surely as He, Who alone can, but most surely will, enable you thus to grow up into God, is Himself 'the free Spirit,' so surely shall you, thus living and growing, be more and more free.

H. D. NIHILL, from '*Alive unto God*,' edited by T. B. Dover.

### Collect.

O eternal God, Father Almighty, Who didst give Thine only Son to be born of a woman, and to be made the Son of Man, that we might be made the sons of God : grant to us to be indeed Thy children, and be Thou, now and ever, our Father, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

STOBART, from the '*Book of Private Prayer*.'

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. ii. 12.

## CHAPTER X.

### Self-offering.

*I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*—Rom. xii. 1.

WE are invited by the example of Christ's cross to offer up our bodies to God : our bodies because it is in them that we are what we are, as living creatures, men born on this earth, of flesh and blood.

Our bodies we must give, we have no other gift. We may not come empty-handed, and the gift is laid in our hand by God ; we cannot repudiate or deny it, we cannot plead that we have nothing to offer. The offering is ourselves, ourselves in our actual, present, physical state. That is what Christ offered ; that is what we, by His grace, may offer to-day.

How wonderful ! This breathing frame, this living network in which I feel myself alive,—all this which I know to be myself, and name by my own name, and belong to, and am,—all this so close, so familiar, so intimate, is a holy thing, acceptable to God, that peculiar offering in which He finds Himself well pleased. This is what He asks for ; this He loves to receive ; for this is that which Jesus Christ took, and blessed, when He looked up to heaven, and gave thanks. All this ! ah ! and far more than this !

All that I feel of bitter remorse when sin has defiled the flesh, I owe to God ; all the sadness and the indignation which

chills or fires me with horrible dread, as one by one my earthly delights fall away from me ; all the dreariness and the weariness which settles down upon my heart as life's novelty dies down, and the world grows grey, and flat, and stale, and unprofitable ; all the sobs that suck out my life's strength, as I stand by the open grave of one whose smile will never more at all on earth greet me with its old, tender, endearing welcome, whose voice will never more again be heard in the old places and paths where we walked and laughed and talked together so many and many a happy hour in merry days gone by ; all this I may bring and offer. Yes, and the blinding tears, and the aching void, and the desolate loneliness, and the voiceless gloom ; all this and more. The pain of unrequited love, of lost hopes, of cramping disappointments, of all the cold and nakedness and hunger, in which I am left to wander along the hard and barren roads of a niggardly world ; all the anguish with which man's sinfulness loads and weighs down my soul, itself, alas ! only too kin to the sins which it loathes ; all the crushing trouble of injustice and infamy ; . . . all the coming agony when my soul shall wrestle with the dark foe, at the gathering of the night of death ; all the pain that may then rack me, all the miserable sense of abandonment, all the fearful sinking of heart as the black waters close over my head, . . . all this that seems only made to torture and bruise and condemn me, so ruthless, so useless, so unmerciful, is after all no horrible accident, no pitiless blunder, no victory of some dark and monstrous law of fruitless pain. No ; this is just the very thing that I may uplift and plead before God. All this is the very offering, the token of true and loving homage, by which I can prove myself loyal-hearted, and so become, in Christ, well pleasing to God.

O most wonderful, most holy privilege ! How is it that I have so long overlooked the gift that God had placed in my hands to offer ?

Can it indeed be true that that which was to me as the shadow of despair, is the moment of my priestly service within the holy places ?

Yes, now ; now is the moment of your call to the ministry of Christ. Now, when the loss of friends is bitter ; now, when the agony of suffering is intense ; now, when the light of your eyes is gone from you, now is the acceptable time ; behold ! now is the day of salvation.

Be strong ; be strong and of a good courage. It has come to you ; it has been put into your hands, your gift, your sacrifice. That suffering, that loss—that *is* it—that is your offering ; your own death, that is your opportunity. Now is your time to show yourself the follower of Him Who carried His own Blood in within the holy places.

Offer up to God your life ; your anguish, your blood. Offer it ; be not afraid. It is a consecrated, a holy thing, the one worthy sacrifice that man can offer.

It is true, *you* are powerless. You cannot make that offering aright. You have not the heart nor the will. You sink down oppressed. You dare not plead before God sufferings so unwillingly accepted, so wearily endured.

No ; but it is not you that offer, but Christ that offers in you. Christ, the mighty Interceder, leaves you not comfortless, leaves you not alone, in the midst of a world of tribulation. He comes to you to make His abode in you, in the power of that Holy Spirit, the Comforter, Who, from within our ignorant prayers, sends up His strong and prevailing supplication.

He comes to you, in the very might and reality of His own perfect sacrifice, to quicken your dull will by the marvellous efficacy of His own Body and Blood—that Body and Blood in which He bore all your weaknesses and all your sins, and laid them, purified and sanctified, on the altar of His holy Cross, that by their everlasting strength and consolation, we, who eat of that Flesh, and drink of that saving Blood, may indeed be baptised with the baptism wherewith He was baptised.

There, He comes, to that upper chamber, where His Church has made ready the passover ; comes at all hours when the world, that hated Him, turns its hatred upon us,



and our friends betray us ; and we ourselves are only too ready to deny Him ; comes, when, against us, evil gathers with its swords and its staves, and our soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Thither He comes ; He enters in ; He abides ; He sups with us ; that we, His friends, may have peace. Peace ! not from trouble, and anguish, and death ; not the peace of easy safety ; not the peace that the world longs after ; but peace in Him Who, amid all trouble, has pledged to us the victory ; peace in that we possess within us Him Who is stronger than all that can be against us. ' Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. In the world ye shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.' <sup>1</sup>

H. S. HOLLAND, *Logic and Life*.

### Prayer.

O Jesu, in Whom we all may be made desirable ! O Lord, Redeemer and Saviour, Prince of all Holiness and Peace ! We have sinned, we have done amiss, we have fallen, we have gone astray, we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under the table of God ! Enter Thou, therefore, into our souls, possess our spirits with Thy Spirit, our body with Thy Body, our blood with Thy Blood. Feed us with Thyself, Who art perfect Righteousness. Lay hold of us by Thy grace, Who art the Truth and the Life. Uplift us, mould us, transform us by Thine own power into Thyself, into the image of the Holy and the Eternal. We desire to shrink from no suffering, to endure all, in the energy of Thy broken Body and outpoured Blood, if only we may be drawn upward into the Likeness of Thyself, into the joy of Thy Holiness ! Fill us with sorrow, if so only Thou canst fill us with Thyself : for only by abiding in Thee, only by eating Thy Flesh and drinking Thy Blood, only by fastening on the grace of Thy perfect, holy, and sufficient Oblation, can we hope to pass from death into life, and to be raised up at the last day from the lowliness of the grave to the Holiness of Heaven !

H. S. HOLLAND.

<sup>1</sup> St. John xiv. 1 ; xvi. 33.

## Willing Obedience.

*Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him Which died for them and rose again.—*

2 Cor. v. 15.

Our wills are ours, we know not how,  
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

TENNYSON.

It is common to suppose that a passive acquiescence in the trials of life is the fulfilment of their intended end. On the contrary, it is their least important result. The real gain to be obtained through the discipline of God in any appointed trial depends on an active co-operation with it. The will must be conformed as well as subdued. It must unite with God, not merely yield to God. A true living union rests on co-operation, not on submission. To infuse into the soul in every trial the lesson it would teach, the spirit of sacrifice it involves, or the self-denial it would elicit, the secret conquest of temper or the increasing earnestness of faith, the sweetness of patience, or the largeness of love, which it is intended to mature, as the needed advance in the progressive development of the soul's life—is the result contemplated, and not merely that the soul of the redeemed should learn to live in passive obedience to an irreversible Will.

Union with God in mind and action is the end alike of the grace of sacraments and of the discipline of life. And the tending to this end, under the influence of the holy Light which ever guides us on, depends on a constant readiness of the will to coalesce with the expressions of the will and purpose of God. The constant yielding of affection and desire to the changing circumstances of the providence of God, is the condition which His grace demands for accomplishing His purpose in us. To yield oneself to each expression of the will of God with a willing inclination; to bear all the cost of the sacrifice with an affectionate cleaving to God, as He reveals Himself in His own chosen course; to live in rest upon the assurance that He will make all work together for good to them that thus love Him—

this is the secret animating principle of the soul which seeks to conform itself to His mind Who revealed in Himself the perfectness of our nature, and Who would speak for all who are His as for Himself when He said, 'I come to do Thy will, O God; I am content to do it; yea, Thy law is within my heart.'<sup>1</sup> The inward assent, the moulding of the heart, the secret constant acceptance of His will, the thankful conformity to His perfect mind, as in His inward revelations of Himself or His providence it is made known to us—this marks the likeness and sets upon us the seal by which in the great day of account we shall be owned and accepted of Him for ever in the 'manifestation of the sons of God.'<sup>2</sup>

T. T. CARTER, '*The Life of Sacrifice*,' *Lent Lectures*.

So teach us on Thy shrine to lay  
Our hearts, and let them day by day  
Intenser blaze and higher.

'*The Conversion of St. Paul*,'—*Christian Year*.

## Sacrifice.

*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*—1 St. Peter ii. 5.

In all that befalls ourselves we are not our own, but Christ's, all that we call ours is His; and when He takes it from us—first one loved treasure, then another, till He makes us poor, and naked, and solitary—let us not sorrow that we are stripped of all we love, but rather rejoice for that God accepts us; let us not think that we are left here, as it were, unreasonably alone; but remember that, by our bereavements, we are in part translated to the world unseen. He is calling us away, and sending on our treasures. The great law of Sacrifice is embracing us, and must have its perfect work. Like Him, we must be made 'perfect through suffering.' Let us pray Him, therefore, to shed abroad in us the mind that was in Christ; that, our will being crucified, we may offer up ourselves to be

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xl. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 19.

disposed of as He sees best, whether for joy or sorrow, blessing or chastisement ; to be high or low ; to be full or suffer need ; to have many friends, or to dwell in a lonely home ; to be passed by, or called to serve Him and His Kingdom in our own land, or among people of a strange tongue ; to be, to go, to do, to suffer as He wills, even as He ordains, even as Christ endured, 'Who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God.'<sup>1</sup> Amen.

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.

Never be afraid of giving up your best, and God will give you His better.

J. HINTON.

'O Father ! not my will but Thine be done'—

So spake the Son.

Be this our charm, mellowing earth's ruder noise

Of griefs and joys ;

That we may cling for ever to Thy breast

In perfect rest !

*Wednesday before Easter—Christian Year.*

Take my heart, Lord, for I cannot give it Thee. Keep it, for I cannot keep it for Thee.

S. AUGUSTINE.

### Prayer.

Into Thy hands, my Father and my God, I commend my spirit, my soul, my body, my powers, my will. I offer to Thee myself, my all ; deal with me as Thou wilt. Receive me, and make me, O God, to become what Jesus would have me to be. Into Thy Divine hands I place my daily work, my cares, my affections, my success, my sorrows, and everything which Thou knowest to be coming upon me. Direct all to Thine honour and glory. Teach me in all to do Thy will, and in all to recognise the work of Thy Divine hands. In this spirit may I live, in this spirit may I die, surrendering myself wholly unto Thee Who carest for me. Since by these hands I live, and am what I am, make me, O God, continually to live through them, and in them to die, that from them I may at the last receive the crown. Amen.

J. E. VAUX, *Christ on the Cross*.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. 14.



## CHAPTER XI.

### The Perfecting of the Saints.

Eph. iv. 12.

*It became Him, for Whom are all things and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.—Heb. ii. 10.*

*The God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.—1 St. Peter v. 10, 11.*

*He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son.—Rev. xxi. 7.*

WHEN we read of our Lord, that ‘He learned obedience by the things that He suffered, and, being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him,’<sup>1</sup> we see the meaning and intent of temptation. Revelation teaches us that it is the ordained liability of moral natures under probation, as the means of establishing them in perfect conformity with the Divine Will. It is the way of learning obedience, necessary even for pure natures; the mode determined for attaining perfection in union with God, even for the perfect. Our Lord was perfect at each stage of His humanity; though, until His Ascension, His human nature did not enter into its fulness of glory in union with God. He gradually advanced towards this ultimate perfection; and the endurance of suffering under temptation was the appointed means through which His human nature passed on to this fulness. Temptation, therefore, is not to be shrunk from as an evil; it is not only to be accepted as a necessity, it is to be

<sup>1</sup> Heb. v. 8, 9.

regarded as a means, though painful, yet a divinely appointed and sure means, through which, by the grace of God, we advance into a blissful union with the Divine Life. . . .

We were recreated in order to meet trial and overcome. It is part of the Divine law which ordered the existence of created life ; for Angels and men alike have been subjected to it. If we view temptation from the point on which we stand in Christ, we can see it to be not merely the test of our obedience, but also the condition of our progress, the means, the instrument of perfection. Temptations are around us as the occasions of exercising the renewed will, of putting forth our supernatural energy, of developing some truer purposes or higher resolves, and in such exercise the spiritual stature grows, as, without it, it could not grow. . . .

A renewed will is the accumulated result of a successive series of minute details of faithful efforts. The beatitude of the Saints is the matured result of the long course of patient strivings, which may have passed wholly unobserved because of their minuteness. One step has followed another in the mysterious progress of daily, hourly acts, each seeming to pass away, as footprints on the sand are obliterated by the advancing tide ; but the end is the Vision of God, and the recompense is the perfection of a nature made one with the Mind of God.

T. T. CARTER, '*The Temptation*,' *Lent Lectures*.

Let us remember, that not martyrs only are perfected through sufferings. They indeed are made glorious by a share of Christ's sufferings in the flesh : but of His sorrow and self-denial all saints are partakers. . . . The law, that every man that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, is still unrepealed in this fallen world. Every faithful man will have the grace-tokens of the cross upon his inmost soul. By temptation, by wrestling against evil, by crucifixion of self, by wrongs and snares from without, by sorrows and afflictions from above, every brother of the Firstborn in the family of man will bear His likeness, and be perfected by the keen edge

of pain. By this longdrawn and weary strife our patience, meekness, faith, perseverance, boldness, and loyalty to Christ are ever tried ; and by trial made perfect.

H. E. MANNING.

God does not treat His sufferers like children who are simply to be petted with soft words, and patted with soft hands till they forget their griefs. He deals with them as men who are capable of knowing the meaning, the explanations, and the purposes of the troubles that come to them. And so He gives them His great truths of consolation. What are those truths? Education, spirituality, and immortality, these seem to be the sum of them. You are in great distress. Your friend is gone. Your life is broken. Your soul is stunned. Is it possible that, sitting still or walking drearily about in your grief, God should make you know education as the law of growth, the endless principle of the sacrifice of a present for a better future ; should reveal spirituality, and make you know the soul's value as far superior to anything that can concern the outer life ; should open to you immortality, and show you the endlessness of His plans, so that what has seemed to your wretchedness to be complete and finished, should appear to be only just begun, and not ready to be judged yet? Is there no consolation in these great thoughts? They do not take your sorrow off ; and oh, whatever be your suffering, I beg you to learn first of all that not that, not to take your sorrow off, is what God means, but to put strength into you, that you may carry it as the tired man, who has drunk the strength-giving river, lifts up his burden by the river-bank and goes singing on his way. Be sure your sorrow is not giving you its best unless it makes you a more thoughtful man than you have ever been before, unless it opens to you ideas that have before been unfamiliar ; mostly these three ideas—education, spirituality, immortality. Those ideas are the keys of all the mysteries of life, and so the gateways to consolation. And it is wonderful to see how, just as soon as a man is really crushed and sorrowful, God seems by every avenue to be

offering those great ideas for that man's acceptance. He seems to write them on the sky, to whisper them from every movement of the commonest machinery of life, to fill books with them that never seemed to know anything of them before, to make the vacant house and the full grave declare them. You are a child of God whom He is training. You have a soul which is your true value. You are to live for ever. Know these truths. By them triumph over the sorrow that He cannot take away, and be consoled.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

O Life, O death, O world, O time,  
O grave, where all things flow,  
'Tis yours to make our lot sublime  
With your great weight of woe.

Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,  
Though bosoms torn may be,  
Yet suffering is a holy thing ;  
Without it what were we ?

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

### Purifying.

WHEN one inquired of the refiner of silver how he knew when the dross was sufficiently separated, he received answer, 'When I can see my own image perfectly reflected in it.'

S. THOMAS AQUINAS.

In all suffering rightly borne, faithfully endured, we have the profound consolation, the joy of knowing that so at least we are doing God's will and perfecting His work, and glorifying Him in sacrifice. True, of course, this blessedness may be lost by rebellion and defiance of the discipline of God's love, by murmuring and bitterness and wrath. But the secret of the Lord—this sweet secret of nearness to Christ and conformity to His image—is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant. See the lapidary at his art. See the precious stone gleaming faintly in the dusk of its rough condition, with earth's dust and



dirt clinging around it. See it another moment, cleansed and cut, flame forth into glowing life in the sunshine. See a true heart under the handling of the Divine Jeweller. See the earth-stains at the first defiling it ; see the clay of earth's riches and pleasures clasping it around, and stifling its attempts to arise and shine. Then see the Heavenly Artist plunge the dull mass into the regenerative bath of the world's sorrows. See Him cut it with the sharp instruments of pain, of the anguish of His own amazing passion, and then see the purer heart of the jewel gleam and flash under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. So daily may we trace the growing glory of humanity redeemed in suffering spirits. They recognise God's will in that which enchains them. They feel God's love in and under the darkness of pain and sorrow. As in S. Paul, so in them, the trials and sufferings purify the whole nature, and their activities, their labours, become more purely and effectively beneficent. They understand why Christ's first word to His followers is, 'If any has a will to come after Me, let Him take up His cross.'<sup>1</sup> The language of S. Paul respecting suffering—so unreal, so unmeaning to the mind of the world—becomes to them daily, as their vision of the world's desolation expands, and grief and loss become ever more familiar, luminous with the deepest spiritual consolation. 'To you'—you who mourn your loved and lost, you to whom life has through loss of fortune become pinched and painful, you who have experienced grief upon grief, trial upon trial in your home or among your kindred or friends—'to you'—reflect with patience and remember even with gratitude—'to you it hath been given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer in His behalf.'<sup>2</sup>

In the battle of life, triumphs and successes too often carry in them men's deepest failures ; for they tend to make men self-confident and proud and hard, and deaf to the calls of God and the cries for help of their suffering fellows. Often it is in the moment of defeat, of weakness, of crushing sorrow and desolation that a man first begins to live a life worth living, that he sees in the scorned and suffering Christ the glory

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 24.

Phil. i. 29.

of heaven (for 'the Lamb is the light thereof') and of earth, the Light of the world, its one Way and Truth and Life. Christ draws near in suffering, and blessed are they who look upon Him when He is thus near. Life's darkness is His hour peculiarly.

'Tis He who once, a heavenly Child,  
Came to a world, not clad in bright  
Spring blossoms, nor in gay leaves dight,  
But in its winter bleak and wild.

To faithful hearts comes evermore,  
When grief has touched with finger sere  
The glories of life's earlier year,  
As never He had done before.

E. B. OTTLEY, from '*Alive unto God*,' edited by T. B. DOVER.

### The Cross of Christ.

*I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.—*  
St. John xii. 32.

*Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps.—I Peter ii. 21.*

LORD, since our griefs on Thee were laid,  
And Thou hast felt their sting,  
Help us in holiest calm to take  
Our turn of suffering ;  
Thou didst look on unto Thy joy,  
And so by grace will we,  
But we would clasp Thy Cross and feel  
We owe that joy to Thee.

C. M. NOEL.

WHO that has really suffered has not felt that in gazing upward towards the Prince of sufferers, all things become changed in their relations? The melancholy past merges into the present, and the present becomes lost in a future,—a future of hope, a future of mercy, a future that swallows up all sorrows, stills the cry of all anguish, deadens the edge of all pain. There with Him is all that we have lost, and all that we have mourned for ; there the loved ones that have gone before ; there the innocent joys of childhood that soon fled

by ; there the quick sympathies that soon were checked ; there the warm affections that soon grew cold ; there the fair hopes to which disappointment brought blight and decay. All are with Him. And to Him, if our hearts yet remain true to God and to our better selves, every suffering only tends to bring us nearer and nearer. We gaze only the more earnestly there, where we know we shall find all : ' Where our treasure is, there shall our heart be also.' <sup>1</sup>

BISHOP ELLICOTT, *The Destiny of the Creature.*

Oh ! sad hearts and suffering ! Anxious and weary ones ! Look to the cross ! There hung your King. The King of sorrowing souls, and more the King of Sorrow. Ay, pain and grief, tyranny and desertion, death and hell, He has faced them one and all and tried their strength, and taught them His, and conquered them right royally ! And since He hung upon that torturing Cross, sorrow is Divine, Godlike as joy itself. All that man's fallen nature dreads and despises, God honoured on the Cross, and took unto Himself and blest and consecrated for ever. And now, blessed are the poor, if they are poor in heart as well as purse, and theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the hungry, if they hunger for righteousness as well as food : for Jesus hungered, and they shall be filled. Blessed are those who mourn, if they mourn not only for their afflictions, but for their sins, and the sins of those they see around them ; for Jesus mourned for our sins : He was made sin for us Who knew no sin ; and they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who are ashamed of themselves and humble themselves before God ; for Jesus humbled Himself for us, and they shall be exalted. Blessed are the forsaken and despised. Did not all men forsake Jesus in His hour of need ? And why not thee too, thou poor deserted one ? Shall the disciple be above his Master ? No, every one that is perfect, must be like his Master. The deeper, the bitterer your loneliness, the more you are like Him who cried upon the Cross, ' My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? ' . . . All things are blessed

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. vi. 21.

now, but sin ; for all things, excepting sin, are redeemed by the life and death of the Son of God. Blessed are wisdom and courage, joy and health and beauty, love and marriage, childhood and manhood, corn and wine, fruits and flowers, for Christ redeemed them by His life. And blessed too are tears and shame, blessed are weakness and ugliness, blessed are agony and sickness, blessed the sad remembrance of our sins, and a broken heart, and a repentant spirit. Blessed is death, and blessed the unknown realms, where souls await the resurrection day, for Christ redeemed them by His death. Blessed are all things, weak as well as strong. Blessed are all days, dark as well as bright, for all are His, and He is ours ; and all are ours, and we are His, for ever. Therefore sigh on, ye sad ones, and rejoice in your own sadness ; ache on, ye suffering ones, and rejoice in your own sorrows. Rejoice that you are made free of the holy brotherhood of mourners, that you may claim your place too, if you will, among the noble army of martyrs. Rejoice that you are counted worthy of a fellowship in the sufferings of the Son of God. Rejoice and trust on, for after sorrow shall come joy. Trust on ; for in man's weakness God's strength shall be made perfect. Trust on, for death is the gate of life. Endure on to the end, and possess your souls in patience for a little while, and that perhaps a very little while. Death comes swiftly, and more swiftly still, perhaps, the day of the Lord. The deeper the sorrow, the nearer the salvation. CHARLES KINGSLEY, *National Sermons, Good Friday.*

### Collect.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the Cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility ; mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of His patience and also be made partakers of His resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Palm Sunday.*



## CHAPTER XII.

### Sympathy.

*I, even I, am He that comforteth you.*—Isaiah li. 12.

*We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.*—Heb. iv. 15.

CONSIDER our Lord's sympathy with all pure human feeling. Think how His sympathy with human sorrow gushed out, as He drew near to the grave of Lazarus. Can we doubt, when Jesus, 'seeing Mary weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled';<sup>1</sup> and He came to the grave and 'wept,'—that before His mind at that hour were plainly visible all the graves that would ever open on this wide earth; that He was then drawing near to all hearts that would ever bleed; that He was weeping for all bereavements which would ever cast their cold, lonely shadows over bright homes and fond embraces of love; that He was placing Himself as near as possible to the sources of human grief, and, by sharing them, understanding by a personal experience what they are to the sufferer, and thus opening within Himself eternal sources of a responsive sympathy with all forms of trial? Though it was only in the case of one human family, and one sad loss, that His feelings were thus stirred to their depths; yet this was but bringing out the great truth of the individuality of His sympathy, showing how each separate sadness, within each separate home, awakens at once the response of His sacred Heart, and how each one may lean the burden of his individual sorrow on His sure unfailing tenderness.

T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures.*

<sup>1</sup> St. John xi. 33, 35.

## Divine Pity.

*In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them : in His love and in His pity He redeemed them ; and He bare them and carried them all the days of old.—Isaiah lxiii. 9.*

THIS, the great key-note of His Advent, sounds on through all the course of His humiliation.

Very pitiful and of tender mercy :—so He ever moves among His fellow-men ; He, the sinless and almighty. No gentle and sensitive woman ever drew near to suffering or sorrow with a pity so delicate and entire as His. No misery seems so remote from the outward circumstances of His life, no anguish is so well-deserved that He can pass it by :—there seems no limit and no denial in the generosity of His compassion :—and from His Presence, even in all the strength and majesty of perfect holiness, there ever streams a grace and radiance of pity at which the most secret sorrows of the world are disclosed, and turn to Him, as flowers in the sunlight.

Even when no special word of compassion is recorded we can feel in all His bearing the pity that is yearning to help. . . . Day after day He labours ever in the same unwearied pitifulness to relieve those common miseries which never seem to Him to lose their pathos in their multitude. Those whose work brings them into very frequent contact with suffering and distress know how hard it is to keep their sensitiveness unimpaired, and their touch quite delicate and gentle :—to be as ready and reverent in compassion with the hundredth sorrow as with the first :—but through all His ceaseless occupation with misery no shadow of dimness or fatigue passes over the clear brightness of our Saviour's sympathy. 'In all their affliction He was afflicted.' In every scene of His ministry we can trace the same unique perfection of majestic strength blended with the utmost beauty of tenderness.

But it was in the last great act of His Self-surrender that men saw to the uttermost what the Divine Pity could be and bear. . . . Obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross :

very pitiful and of tender mercy, even in death itself : such is the revelation of the Most Highest in the history of mankind : so is the knowledge of the glory of God vouchsafed in Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . We cannot wonder if through the generations that look back to Calvary pity has revealed a dignity and beauty unsuspected in earlier ages.

God puts within our reach the power of helpfulness, the ministry of pity : He is ever ready to increase His grace in our hearts, that as we live and act among all the sorrows of the world we may learn by slow degrees the skill and mystery of consolation : not only has He had pity on us, but He also suffers us to know the blessing and the happiness of entering, with the gentleness of a pity not utterly unlike His own (just because it is indeed His gift), into the troubles and the wants of others. 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.' There is no surer way of steadfast peace in this world than the active exercise of pity ; no happier temper of mind and work than the lowly watching to see if we can lessen any misery that is about us : nor is there any better way of growth in faith and love.

The heavens will never grow dark above us in this life, while we guard in our hearts the grace of pity : and after this life we may go out into the mystery that lies beyond with His own clear word of promise : when we need it perhaps most terribly, we shall find most richly the pity which has been with us all along : for it is the beatitude of the pitiful that they shall obtain pity.

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief.*

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesus have mercy upon all sufferers. Grant them, continually meditating upon Thy holy life of suffering, to realise in weakness the strength of Thine Incarnation ; in pain, the triumph of Thy passion ; in poverty, the riches of Thy Godhead ; in reproach, the satisfaction of Thy sympathy ; in loneliness, the comfort of Thy continual Presence ; in difficulty, the efficacy of Thine intercession ; in perplexity, the guidance of

Thy wisdom ; and bring them of Thy mercy, when this suffering life is past, to the glorious kingdom which, by Thy suffering, Thou didst purchase for all who would take refuge in Thy mediation. Amen.

R. M. BENSON, *The Manual of Intercessory Prayer.*

### Human Sympathy.

*Fail not to be with them that weep, and mourn with them that mourn.—Ecclus. vii. 34.*

*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.—2 Cor. i. 3, 4.*

In helping others we benefit ourselves ; we heal our own wounds in binding up those of others. S. AMBROSE.

ALWAYS say a kind word if you can, if only that it may come in, perhaps, with singular opportuneness, entering some mournful man's darkened room, like a beautiful firefly whose happy circumvolutions he cannot but watch, forgetting his many troubles.

ARTHUR HELPS.

If we truly knew what sorrow is, we should count it a high calling to be allowed to minister the least word of consolation to the afflicted. Therefore, if we be called to suffer, let us understand it to be a call to a ministry of healing. God is setting us apart to a sort of pastoral office, to the care of the sick of His flock. There is a hidden ministry which works in perfect harmony with the orders of His Church ; a ministry of secret comfort, diffusing itself by the power of sympathy and prayer. Within His visible Church are many companies of sorrow, many that weep alone, a fellowship of secret mourners ; and to them the contrite and humbled are perpetually ministering, shedding peace, often unawares. Things that they have learned in seasons of affliction, long pondered thoughts, realities learned by suffering, perceptions of God's love and presence—all these are put in trust with them for the consolation



of His elect. They know not oftentimes to whom they speak. Perhaps they have never seen them, nor ever shall. Unknown to each other, they are knit in bonds higher than all ties of blood ; they are formed and constituted in that higher unity which is the order of Christ's Kingdom. When all the relations of this lower life shall be dissolved, the bonds of their heavenly kindred shall be revealed. Mourners and comforters shall meet at last in the Holy City. 'Then God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.'<sup>1</sup>

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.

Who shall attempt to describe the indescribable, and tell the power of sympathy? You go to see your friend on whom some great sorrow has fallen. You sit beside him, you look into his eyes. You say a few broken and faltering words, and then you go away disheartened. How entirely you have failed to do for him that which you went to do, that which you would have given the world to do ! How you have seemed only to intrude on him, when you really longed to help him ! How many times you have done this, and then how many times you have been afterwards surprised to find that you really did help him with that silent visit. Never let the seeming worthlessness of sympathy make you keep back that sympathy of which, when men are suffering around you, your heart is full. Go and give it without asking yourself whether it is worth while to give it. It is too sacred a thing for you to tell what it is worth. God, from whom it comes, sends it, through you, to His needy child.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

It is a little thing to speak a phrase  
Of common comfort, which by daily use  
Has almost lost its sense ; yet on the ear  
Of him who thought to die unmourned, 'twill fall  
Like choicest music.

TALFOURD, *Ion*.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi. 4.

## Our Great Intercessor.

*He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*—Heb. vii. 25.

IT is a meditation fraught with comfort to believe that our Lord, enthroned in glory at the Father's right hand, while receiving the homage of the countless hosts of the unfallen creation, has still His interests in the Church on earth; that not only does He know what is going on in each individual human soul, but that He responds to its wants and aspirations, that he sympathises with its sorrows, and concerns Himself in its hopes and fears. Nay more, most satisfying is the feeling that, with delicate thought and nice discrimination, He applies to each one of us just that medicament which the sick and weary soul stands in need of. He knows exactly what grace to supply—at once the Good Physician and the Cure.

How little do we realise this mighty department of the intercession of Christ! It is not enough that in correspondence with the liturgies of earth, He ever liveth, presenting Himself as the One all-sufficient, ever-abiding Sacrifice for a guilty world. It is not enough that He hath entered into Heaven as our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, to appear in the presence of God for us; He hath done more than this: He hath ascended, that He might receive gifts for men; that He might possess Himself of that Grace which He hath purchased by His own most Holy Blood and rain down in fertilising showers on the arid and dry soil of the human heart, as it is written: 'He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool, even as the drops that water the earth.'<sup>1</sup>

Try to fix this thought in your hearts. Try to realise the aspect of the Heavenly court above. 'Look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith,'<sup>2</sup> as He is at this moment. See him in the midst of the radiant hierarchies of the heavenly hosts, at once exercising His sacerdotal mediation, and receiving the adoration and worship of the boundless universe; but see Him also in His love and in His gentleness, pouring down

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 2.

grace into every rational soul, recreating and gladdening the holy Angels, giving additional light and glory to His saints, searching into the mysterious realms of the world of departed souls, visiting the earth and blessing it. See Him strengthening the just, consoling the weak-hearted, arguing with the hardened sinner, encouraging the relapsing Christian, pleading with the neglectful, warning the thoughtless, protesting to the impenitent. There is no possible condition of soul which the grace of Christ toucheth not. Never, never, till the Day of Judgment, shall we know all that He hath done for us in this wise: for 'His mercy is over all His works.'

BISHOP FORBES, *Sermons on the Grace of God.*

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our sympathising Saviour, Who for man didst bear the Agony and the Cross; draw Thou near to Thy suffering servants, in their pain of body or trouble of mind [especially N.]; hallow all their crosses in this life, and crown them hereafter where all tears are wiped away; where, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Thou livest and reignest, One God, world without end. Amen.

*From 'The Treasury of Devotion.'*

Oh, how shall we vext pilgrims thank our God  
 That, clothed in all the weakness of our clay  
 To guide our stumbling feet, Himself hath trod  
 Each footstep of our life's mysterious way?—  
 That never yet on earth a trial tore  
 The tender stuff whereof our souls are made,  
 But He before us the same trial bore  
 Long ere the lines of our own life were laid?—  
 That never yet a crafty, traitorous thought  
 Slid to the heart to slay the peace of man,  
 Which he had not as sinless victor fought  
 Before the time of test for us began?—

And that the death which had so long appalled  
Was through His dying for the world dethroned ?  
And all humanity thus disenthralled  
From the great burden under which it groaned.

O Saviour Christ, who hast, incarnate, known  
All mortal trials and all mortal throes,  
Here at the foot of this Thine Altar-Throne,  
I dare my sorrows and my sins disclose ;  
For Thou hast felt and Thou canst ever feel,  
And Thou hast borne and livest still to bear,  
And souls, sore-stricken, need not to conceal  
From Thee one aching wound or blinding tear.  
We shudder in a sad and sore amaze  
When, in life's pause, we cast a glance within,  
And, through the excusing clouds that meet our gaze,  
We glimpse the crater-gulf of possible sin.

And oh! how broken-winged our best desire,  
That barely flutters when it fain would fly,  
Bound to the earth, though yearning to aspire,  
With eagle-flight into love's cloudless sky.  
O Saviour Christ, we erring ones must veil,  
Death-shamed, the heart's abyss, hadst Thou not proved  
That, though the human in us faint and fail,  
The God who made us made us to be loved.

A. EUBULE-EVANS, *Through Dark to Light*.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### Patience.

*The Lord is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.—Lam. iii. 24-6.*

*If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.—Rom. viii. 25.*

CAN we not feel that it is well for us to pause and think of the blessedness of waiting ; hurried, as we are, to and fro, by the inevitable tumult of modern life ? For it is still through long watching that at last the opportunity is found for mastering the truths towards which our hopes have been turned. It is still not unfrequently through sorrow that we gain little by little the power of insight by which the meaning of familiar facts is disclosed. It is still by silent ponderings, in the solitude of the inner chamber, as in the solitude of the crowd, that we learn the lesson of communing with God. And our anxiety for results which we can measure, our restlessness under conditions which we hold to be unfavourable to our progress, our passion for excitement, tend to deprive us of these highest fruits of life. We cannot remove the conditions under which our work is to be done, but we can transform them. They are the elements out of which we must build the temples wherein we serve.

In one sense God gives nothing, while in another sense He gives all things. He requires us, that is, to make His gifts our own by using the power which He inspires. Not all at once, and not as we should have expected, and not without many delays, does that which indeed is ours become ours.

So it is that waiting itself becomes a work, and of all the promises of Scripture, none, I think, speaks with fuller encouragement to such as seem to find no fruit of labour or no scope for it, if only they wait for the Lord Who will not leave them desolate, than this: 'In your patience ye shall win your souls.'<sup>1</sup>

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *Social Aspects of Christianity*.

### Patient Confidence.

*Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.*—Hosea vi. 3.

*What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.*—  
St. John xiii. 7.

THE knowledge and love of God is rare and precious because we win it at such a cost. If many things are still dim to us, if we implore 'in this world knowledge of Thy Truth, and in the world to come life everlasting,' and we can hardly ask it for sad, weary yearning, perhaps it is because we are yet only on the threshold of the spiritual life. For some souls it may need a long education before they are able to rise to the truth.

E. WATSON.

He 'leadeth' His own 'by ways which they know not, even by a path which they have not trod with their feet.'<sup>2</sup> Hold fast what thou hast; act up to what thou believest; walk on in His strength; halt not; and what thou yet lackest, He has said 'He will reveal unto thee.'

E. B. PUSEY.

*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*—Deut. xxxiii. 27.

NOT upon this side of time may the blessed promise find its fulfilment. The foot may be dipped in the chill dark river before the heavenly light has shone upon the face. The eye may be blind to dearest faces and forms, ere the Sun of Righteousness dawns; as in the natural world, the darkest, coldest hour is that before the daybreak. The tongue may

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xxi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah xlii. 16; xli. 3.

never be able to tell surviving loved ones, how the shadows fled away when the dark valley was past, till they have passed through that darkness too. Yes, to the believer, true as that God liveth, 'at the evening-time there shall be light'<sup>1</sup>; if not in this world, then in a better! Bowing his head to pass under the dark portal, the believer lifts it up on the other side, in the presence and the light of God. It is but a single step from the darkness of death into the light of immortality; and if the evening should remain gloomy to its very end, all the brighter will seem the glory when the latest breath has parted.

*The Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson.*

### Prayer.

O God the Fountain of Wisdom, Whom to know is everlasting life, and in Whom to live is to be filled with the knowledge of all things, have mercy upon the souls of Thy servants who are darkened with the shadows of perplexity, and enlighten them with the brightness of Thy presence. Draw their hearts unto Thyself by the inspiration of Thy holy Love, that they may receive Thy gracious teaching. . . . Speak to them by the suggestions of Thy Holy Spirit, and guide them by the tokens of Thy grace, that the truth of the inner voice may be made sure to them while they faithfully obey Thine outer Providence. Quicken them to search into Thy Word with holy joy, to bow before the mystery of Thy counsels with humble self-abasement, to wait for Thy perfect revelation with patient confidence. . . . Strengthen them with a good courage to persevere amidst the darkness of this present life, going forward in quietness, and holding fast Thy truth in a good conscience, without fear, until they attain, with all Thy saints, to behold the manifestation of Thy Glory in Thine eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Manual of Intercessory Prayer.*

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv. 7.

Dark is the sky that overhangs my soul,  
The mists are thick that through the valley roll,  
But as I tread I cheer my heart and say,  
When the Day breaks the shadows flee away.

Unholy phantoms from the deep arise,  
And gather through the gloom before mine eyes ;  
But all shall vanish at the dawning ray—  
When the Day breaks the shadows flee away.

I bear the lamp my Master gave to me,  
Burning and shining must it ever be,  
And I must tend it till the night decay—  
Till the Day break and shadows flee away.<sup>1</sup>

He maketh all things good unto His own,  
For them in every darkness light is sown ;  
He will make good the gloom of this my day—  
Till that Day break and shadows flee away.

He will be near me in the awful hour,  
When the last foe shall come in blackest power ;  
And He will hear me when at last I pray,  
Let the Day break, the shadows flee away !

In Him, my God, my Glory, I will trust :  
Awake and sing, O dweller in the dust !  
Who shall come, will come, and will not delay—  
His Day will break, those shadows flee away !

S. J. STONE.

## The Reward of Patience.

*Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*—St. James i. 4.

THE time is short ; a few more years, and borne on our Saviour's cross, the waves of this troublesome world will be passed, our haven won, and we at rest, where we should be, in

<sup>1</sup> Song of Solomon ii. 17.



Abraham's bosom, with all whom He hath loved to the end : a few struggles at most, few in proportion to the joy set before us, and the last struggle will resign us over to the end of our struggles, even endless peace, of which the peace vouchsafed to each faithful struggle is the earnest and the preparation : a few years past, and what will it concern us, under what circumstances we have passed our life, so that our lot is then with God's saints ? What will matter, then, privation, sorrow, disappointment, dejection of heart, failing of the eyes, suffering of the body ? Yea, rather, as our loving Lord spoke, how blessed it will have been to have 'mourned' if by His mercy we may then 'be comforted' ; how blessed to have been 'poor in spirit,' if then through His merits ours be 'the Kingdom of Heaven' ; how blessed any self-denial, or toil, or pain, or chastisement, whereby purity of heart shall have been retained or restored, if, when we shall close our eyes upon the vanities and distractions of this passing world, and open them upon eternity, we shall 'see God.' Which may He of His infinite mercy grant, not for our worthiness, but to our unworthiness, for the worthiness of His ever-blessed Son, in Whom He 'hath made' such as we are, and can make us also 'to be meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.'

E. B. PUSEY.

### Collect.

O Lord, we pray Thee that the thought of the country towards which we are travelling may make us forgetful of the weariness of the journey ; and if Thou addest a weight of troubles, give us also strength that we may not faint under the burden. Thou, O Lord, hast gone before us, bearing Thy Cross, make us to bear ours after Thee, ever looking unto Thee, and putting our trust in Thee, O Lord alone, Who livest and reignest, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

*From 'The Priest's Prayer Book.'*

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Peace.

*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.—*  
St. Matt. xi. 28, 29.

*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.—*St. John xiv. 27.

THE desire of rest planted in the heart is no sensual, no unworthy one; but a longing for renovation, and for escape from a state whose every phase is mere preparation for another equally transitory, to one in which permanence becomes possible through perfection. Hence the great call of Christ to men, that call on which S. Augustine fixed as the essential expression of Christian hope, is accompanied by the promise of rest; and the death-bequest of Christ to men is peace.

JOHN RUSKIN, *Frondes Agrestes*.

Man's nature needs a higher nature than itself to be its stay, its peace. A higher Presence than its own must enter within it, to become a part of itself, or there is a void, a loneliness.

T. T. CARTER.

The true and only lasting rest of man's spirit is in love. When he can find an object that can really take him in, really embrace, really understand, really become one with him, then there is rest. We are always seeing it, even here and now. If we really know the deeper side of human feeling, if we have

ever seen any instance of the high possibilities of wedded love, we recognise there a likeness of this truth, and we know something that is luminous to us, when Christ meets us and tells us that in Him, here and now, there is deliverance, repose, rest—the rest not of inaction and mere languor, but the rest that comes from deliverance, not only from darkness and error, but from the deeper misery of self; the rest that comes from felt sympathy. Not by removing burdens, but by giving a spirit and a power to bear the burden; not by changing thorns into roses, but by helping us to bear the thorns; not by giving us indolent inaction, or freedom from duty, or mere self-gratification, but by teaching us the blessedness of labour, by showing us that in labour we share His burden; not by leaving us alone, but by dragging us into strife and stern battle, above all, in and through all, by the power of felt association with Himself—by the union of our Baptism, by the perpetually renewed oneness of the Holy Communion—Christ gives us rest here and now.

We so tired, so restless, so weary, utter the old moan of impatience, ‘Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! Then would I flee away, and be at rest.’<sup>1</sup> But by degrees we feel that no wings would help us, no mere escape would give us what we want. It is not the wilderness that we really want; it is love here and now, it is interest, it is companionship, it is relief from our loneliness, it is the Hand pierced for love of us, it is the contact with a heart that can feel with us, that knows and understands and can take us in, that at once warns us and encourages us, and that points out the road—the path of duty, the path of service, the path of active self-sacrifice, and then gives a motive, ‘for my sake,’ and says, Here is your rest: ‘Whosoever will save his life’—by keeping it from trouble—‘shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life’—fling it away—‘for My sake shall keep it unto life eternal.’ And we must let Him teach us, else we shall be restless to the end. We shall look on to death to deliver us, but we shall be more restless in death, when left by ourselves and to ourselves, we

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lv. 6.

shall go on to the end, wailing 'Oh, that I had the wings of a dove ! then would I flee away,' and never learn the truth—that, not in fleeing away, not in the wilderness, not in happiness, not in enjoyment, but in taking the yoke and bearing the burden, in fellowship with love itself, there and there alone we shall find 'rest for our souls.' And that because there we shall find peace within, repose in an unseen Presence, on an unfailing Love. The surface of the ocean may be broken by waves, lashed by winds, storm-tossed, restless, but beneath is the unbroken repose of the depths of the sea that no storm affects and no waves disturb.

Will we take Him at His word? . . . Will we learn the lesson which comes so slowly, that in Him and in the consciousness of His love there is rest here and now, rest in the burden and heat of the day, rest in the long afternoon, rest in the dreary routine, rest in the tiresome details that tax our attention and weary our brains, rest in the exacting tasks ; amid the stones and the rough places, the disappointments and the trials, the weariness and the loneliness and the uncongenial companionship, there is still rest in Christ, rest at His feet in the attitude of obedience, rest in His heart in the felt assurance of His love and interest, rest in deliverance by His life from the real torment, the torment of self, the agony of self-consciousness, from which no one and nothing else but Christ Himself, and a maintained union with Christ, can ever deliver us.

ROBERT EYTON, *The True Life*.

### Collect.

Almighty and everlasting God, Who dost govern all things in heaven and earth ; Mercifully hear the supplications of Thy people, and grant us Thy peace all the days of our life ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Second Sunday after Epiphany.*



*Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful.*—Col. iii. 5.

*The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*—St. James iii. 18.

If we are really Christ's . . . the needs of men shall touch us just as keenly as they touch Him, but the sneers and strifes of men shall pass us by as they pass by Him and leave no mark on His unruffled life. It will be just as impossible for us to work ourselves into a passion about yesterday's gossip, as it was for Jesus to become a partisan in the quarrel about the undivided inheritance. And yet for us, just as for Him, this will not mean a cold and selfish separation from our brethren. We shall be infinitely closer to their real life when we separate ourselves from their outside strifes and superficial pride, and know and love them truly by knowing and loving them in God.

This is the power and progress of true Christianity. It leads us into, it abounds in, peace. It is a brave, vigorous peace, full of life, full of interest and work. It is a peace that means thoroughness, that refuses to waste its force and time in little superficial tumults which come to nothing, while there is so much real work to be done, so much real help to be given, and such a real life to be lived with God. That peace, His peace, may Jesus give to us all.

PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Sermons*.

In proportion as the perfect obedience of the life of Christ comes, through humility and prayer and thought, to be the constant aim of all our efforts : in proportion as we try, God helping us, to think and speak and act as He did, and through all the means of grace to sanctify Him in our hearts : we shall with growing hope and with a wonder that is ever lost in gratitude know that even our lives are not without the earnest of their rest in an eternal harmony : that through them there is sounding more and more the echo of a faultless music : and that He who loves that concord, He who alone can ever make

us what He bids us be, will silence in us every harsh and jarring note : that our service too may blend with the consenting praise of all His Saints and Angels.

FRANCIS PAGET, *Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief.*

*Grace be unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come.*—Rev. i. 4.

It is 'the Peace of God which passeth all understanding'<sup>1</sup> that keeps us in the knowledge and in the love of God ; in both, if in either. And the peace of God is that inward condition in which the soul, embracing heartily the essentials of Christian Faith, rests with entire confidence on the revealed love of God in Christ, and, yielding itself back to God with answering love, desires before all things that His will may be done 'in earth as it is in heaven.' This is the condition of the children of God, wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Sanctifier, the Enlightener, without whose help there can be no true knowledge of the things of God. His presence in the soul, the accompaniment of the indwelling therein of Him who is 'our Peace,'<sup>2</sup> 'keeps both heart and mind in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.' But, in the growth of the Christian life within us, each helps on the other, and tends to increase it in mutual reaction. The love of God, the will to do His will, the accompaniment of each approach towards even the barest thought of Him by a reverent longing, by the impulse of adoration, these are the first elementary conditions of any real knowledge of God . . . Where they are present the intellectual and spiritual vision of Truth, though necessarily imperfect as to both extension and intention, is clear in itself as far as it reaches, and in its gathering strength furnishes ever fresh motive and material for adoring love.

P. G. MEDD, *The One Mediator.*

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 14.

## Rest.

Let the great sea of my soul that swelleth with the waves,  
calm itself in Thee.

S. AUGUSTINE.

LIFE'S mystery, deep, restless as the ocean,  
Hath surged and wailed for ages to and fro ;  
Earth's generations watch its ceaseless motion  
As in and out its hollow moanings flow :  
Shivering and yearning by that unknown sea,  
Let my soul calm itself, O Christ, in Thee.

Life's sorrows, with inexorable power,  
Sweep desolation o'er the mortal plain ;  
And human hopes and loves fly as the chaff  
Borne by the whirlwind from the ripened grain.  
Ah ! when before that blast my hopes all flee,  
Let my soul calm itself, O Christ, in Thee.

Between the mysteries of death and life  
Thou standest : loving, guiding, not explaining :  
We ask and Thou art silent : yet we gaze,  
And our charmed hearts forget their drear complaining.  
No crushing fate, no stony destiny,  
Thou Lamb that hast been slain, we rest in Thee.

The many waves of thought, the mighty tides,  
The ground-swell that rolls up from other lands,  
From far-off worlds, from dim eternal shores  
Whose echo dashes on life's wave-worn strands :  
This vague dark tumult of the inner sea  
Grows calm, grows bright, O risen Lord, in Thee.

Thy pierced Hand guides the mysterious wheel,  
Thy thorn-crowned brow now wears the crown of power,  
And when the dark enigma presseth sore,  
Thy patient voice saith, 'Watch with Me one hour.'  
As sinks the moaning river in the sea,  
In silver peace, so sinks my soul in Thee.

HARRIET BEECHER-STOWE.



BETWEEN THE MYSTERIES  
OF DEATH AND LIFE  
THOU STANDEST





**Collect.**

Lord God Almighty, Christ the King of glory, Who art our true Peace, and Love Eternal; enlighten our souls with the brightness of Thy peace, and purify our consciences with the sweetness of Thy love, that we may with peaceful hearts wait for the Author of Peace, and in the adversities of this world may ever have Thee for our Guardian and Protector; and so, being fenced about by Thy care, may heartily give ourselves to the love of Thy peace. Amen.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects.*

## CHAPTER XV.

### Progress.

*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; they shall walk, and not faint.—Isaiah xl. 31.*

*Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.—Phil. i. 6.*

ALL which man attaineth to in this life is but the beginning of what is to be ripened in eternity ; God's saints seem to themselves to be ever beginning.

If we see not what lies beyond, let us walk on where we see and we shall reach it.

E. B. PUSEY.

Humility and toil are the two uprights of the ladder by which we ascend to Paradise.

S. BERNARD.

*I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.—St. John xiv. 6.*

WE have been placed upon the Way. We have been taught the Truth. We have been made partakers of the Life. The Way must be traversed ; the Truth must be pursued ; the Life must be realised. Then cometh the end. Our pilgrimage, long as it may be or short, if we have walked in Christ will leave us by the throne of God ; our partial knowledge, if we have looked upon all things in Christ, will be lost in open sight ; our little lives, perfected, purified, harmonised in Him Whom we have trusted, will become in due order parts of the one Divine Life when God is all in all.

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *The Revelation of the Father.*

‘Love fulfils the law.’ Everything becomes possible to those who love. The commands of the Lord are no longer grievous, for the soul that loves is gifted by that love with fresh energies ; it discovers in itself unsuspected possibilities, and is supplied with ever-flowing currents of new vigour. The impossible becomes possible to all who look to another and love ; the hard loses its hardness, and the grievous ceases from grieving. Love enlightens, and warms, and cheers, and renews ; and again and again the self within us presses forward under its sweet breath toward the hope set before us.

Unselfishness is the only salt that preserves our soundness, unselfishness is the only fire that purifies, and refines, and betters, and makes perfect. We shall be enabled to do so much if only we love. We live by loving, and the more we love the more we live ; and therefore, when life feels dull and the spirits are low, turn and love God, love your neighbour, and you will be healed of your wound. Love Christ, the dear Master ; look at His Face, listen to His words, and love will waken, and you will do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth you.

H. S. HOLLAND, *Creed and Character*.

Knowledge comes through love, and where the light of Christ rests, there the heart of the believer finds a fulness of teaching which all life is too short to master.

BISHOP WESTCOTT.

### *Collect.*

Lord, we pray Thee that Thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.*



### Progress by looking forward.

Not even to dwellers on the mystic height,  
Not to the Saints, is full enlightening given :  
The Cross they hold by, towers beyond their sight,  
On the hill peak opens a deeper heaven.

*Lyra Innocentium.*

Many altogether fail, because their inward gaze is fixed on the clouds which perpetually hang around the horizon of their life.

Yet the true life is beyond. Beyond is the only enduring vision. Beyond lies the eternal. Beyond is the interpretation of the mystery of the dispensations, the secret of the all-ruling Mind, the only clue to what seems the ravelled skein, but is really the marvellous interlacing of the manifold lines of the Providence of God. Beyond is the true 'Light' which is the 'Life of men,' which from behind the cloud shines through and within the soul that looks for It—the Light which irradiates the emancipated spirit's secret recesses, kindles its deeper thoughts, and sheds a halo around all the circumstances, even the most trying passages, of this passing state. Beyond is the full fruition of that of which all present hope is the feeble reflection. Beyond is the Joy, on the threshold of which the believing spirit waits, which thrills even now through all its inner senses, growing ever more and more into the delighted consciousness of 'the powers of the world to come.' And in this anticipated Joy sorrow loses all its desolateness, pain ceases to be overpowering, loneliness is cheered, life's burden becomes easy, the bitterness of death is past.

Thus encompassed with the 'great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; Who, for the joy which was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the Right Hand

of the Throne of God.’<sup>1</sup> His perfected destiny is the cause and pledge of ours, if we are indeed His. Our end and His will then be one, unchangeably, eternally one. ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne.’<sup>2</sup>

T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures.*

## Progress towards Perfection.

*The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.—Heb. xiii. 20, 21.*

OUR end ought to be our perfection; our perfection is Christ. For in Him we are perfected, because we are members of Him our Head.

The end whereat we aim is Christ ; make we what efforts we will, we are perfected in Him and by Him ; and this is our perfection—to attain to Him ; for, if thou attain to Him, thou seekest no further. It is thy End.

S. AUGUSTINE.

In the possibilities of the ever-increasing advancement of our renewed life in other worlds, lies one of our truest encouragements, when we mourn the slowness and imperfections of our progress in this world. Our greatness is not so much in what we here attain, but in what we may attain hereafter. And so our trust for the present is not so much the actual gain, but our tendency towards a future gain. The possible reach of grace is too great to be compassed by any present rule. The measure of the stature of Christ<sup>3</sup> is too vast to suppose that any present attainment can be adequate to the conception realised. All is now ‘in part.’<sup>4</sup> ‘Now we know in part and we prophesy in part.’<sup>4</sup> Only, ‘when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.’ Even St. Paul says of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 1, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iii. 21, 22.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.

himself, 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after. I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'<sup>1</sup> When we would try ourselves, even though it be the latest experience of the departing saint, it is rather as to what we tend to be, than what we are, that we judge ourselves. We judge of the future by the tendencies of the present. The upward growth will be according to the bent of the strengthening stem. We cannot see God, but we can see what tends towards God. The mystical ladder's ascending steps are within our gaze. The Form of the Everlasting, Who standeth above, is shrouded in the inscrutable darkness. We are at best like tropical plants struggling beneath ungenial skies with stunted growth, which can bear no fruit, nor expand into flower, but which, if transplanted into the regions of the sun, would develop into richest foliage and abundant produce. The poor deformed races of men who creep along the frozen seas, if removed to the sunny south might rise to a nobler stature and developed powers. This same law nourishes Christian hope, through the belief that the faint feeble beginnings of this season of struggles and fears, while the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, far off from God, when transferred to more genial skies shall, if not here, yet there, expand into their predestined fulness, that all whose eyes shall then behold God, shall grow into the perfect likeness of God, in the power of the vision of God.

T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures.*

To love the perfection of the Gospel as personified in the Author of it, even the Father of Heaven, is to see that perfection more thoroughly (for such is the very property of spiritual enlightenment, as well as, in a great degree, the property of even the natural mind—to *see* excellence more vividly the more we *love* it). But must not the better sight of perfection

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 12-14.

quicken, in its turn, the very love that gave that better vision ? And thus, the object more prominent and the love more animated, will perpetually call each other into new and brighter existence ; every perception of God will set the heart on fire, and every burning emotion of holy love will in return bring God nearer to the soul ; His presence will answer the demand of the adorer, and the adorer will rise, as his demand is granted, in prayers for a closer and yet closer presence ; and where,—where—shall this progress to infinite perfection end ? Never in this world,—never, perhaps, in the next.

*Our perfection* for eternity may be progress for eternity ! Such at this hour may be the perfection of the Angels. And the whole universe of pure born and regenerate beings may be conceived as scattered at different points along one vast highway leading to the light inaccessible where God dwells alone, in the secret sanctuary of His own infinite attributes ; all travel incessantly towards the light which glows brighter and brighter on them as they advance,—for the progress is their happiness. *We*,—alas for fallen human nature !—are far back upon the course ; but still it is a *common* course to all, and the good and great of every world are our fellow-travellers to God !

ARCHER BUTLER, *Sermons*.

Heavenwards, Homewards ! through the dense  
Dark clouds of sorrow, and the sense  
Of present frailty, past offence ;

Heavenwards, Homewards ! by the road  
The poor in spirit ever trod,  
And tread, in pilgrimage to God ;

Heavenwards, Homewards ! till they win  
That blest inheritance, wherein  
Is no more sorrow, no more sin.

S. J. STONE.



*Collect.*

Grant Thy servants, O God, to be set on fire with Thy Spirit, strengthened by Thy power, illuminated by Thy splendour, filled with Thy grace, and to go forward by Thine aid. Give them, O Lord, a right faith, perfect love, true humility. Grant, O Lord, that there may be in us simple affection, brave patience, persevering obedience, perpetual peace, a pure mind, a right and clean heart, a good will, a holy conscience, spiritual compunction, ghostly strength, a life unspotted and unblameable ; and after having manfully finished our course, may we be enabled happily to enter into Thy Kingdom.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

### Union with Christ.

*He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*—Eph. i. 6.

*Christ in you the hope of glory.*—Col. i. 27.

*Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*—1 St. John i. 3.

IN a life united with Jesus Christ, and in that life alone, is the happiness of humanity; for there alone is the true sphere of human life found. All lives that own any other centre than Jesus are swallowed up with hunger and with thirst. Over every other well, to which thirsting humanity flocks to slake its agonising thirst, the experience of the generations of men has written: 'He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again,'<sup>1</sup> but they who drink of the water of life never thirst. In Jesus Christ is the satisfaction of every want, and the quieting of every fear, for in the life of the justified on earth is the anticipation of the life of the glorified in heaven—even of that full development of the varied powers of our being, and that perfect satisfaction which awaits the redeemed of God in the heavenly court, 'where they hunger no more, nor thirst any more, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne does feed them.'<sup>2</sup>

G. BODY, *The Life of Justification.*

The indwelling of God within our renewed nature is the special blessing of those who, having been redeemed by Christ, are made one with Him through partaking of His Sacrifice. To some it is a difficulty to realise in any measure the indwelling of God. But consider how the same difficulty exists with

<sup>1</sup> St. John iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vii. 16, 17.

regard to all life. We touch and scrutinise the fresh green budding plant, instinct with exuberant life ; but everywhere its life evades equally the grasp of the hand, or the perception of the mind. We stand before the living form amazed, perplexed ; we pass away, musing, wondering. The same law of the secrecy of life prevails everywhere around us. Probably one great part of the mysterious thrilling joy of the Future will be to look upon the inner workings and seats of life with an understanding heart. This insight, this perception of the presence of life, is not yet given to us. Hitherto God has been pleased to interpose a thin but perfectly impervious screen between our keenest gaze and the operations of life. We know by instinct that the living soul indwells, moves, gives expression and animation to, our living bodies. But what we see of its expression is not the soul itself ; what we feel within of its energies is not the seat of its being, but only the bodily organ through which the spiritual presence lives and moves. If a Living Presence of a yet higher and more mysterious order than our soul connects itself with, lives and works within and through it, may we not suppose that such a life would be far more impalpable, still further removed from the possibility of sense, or of mental apprehension ? The philosopher of old, when asked for a proof that he was alive, stamped upon the ground as his only reply. He meant to imply that action is the proof of life. In like manner, though unable to comprehend or trace the workings of the Divine Presence, we believe that through the accepted Sacrifice we partake of the Being Whom we mystically offer, and Him to Whom we offer, and that the Being Whom we thus adore is God. He dwells in us, and we in Him ; He is one with us, and we with Him. We use the appointed means. We cannot doubt the promised result. But to search out and track the Eternal in the substance of our spiritual nature, is not given to us. He evades all our longings. 'Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself.'<sup>1</sup> . . .

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xlv. 15.

If, as we offer the acceptable service of a life of sacrifice in Christ, we fulfil the desire of His soul, and are in Him Who is well pleasing to the Father, and thus share His acceptableness, the result must be an unspeakably blessed and glorious reconciliation of mutual rest and delight in a united life and common acts of all-absorbing fellowship and joy unspeakable. More and more, in an ever-deepening truth, we thus 'in Him live and move and have our being.' For He, and all that He has won for us, becomes ours. His joy in the Father is ours. The Father's joy in Him is ours. It is a unity of life ; and all that makes life precious, and all that pleases in the mutual interchange of living powers of love and joy, between the Father and the Son, are ours, who are in the Son, and through the Son are in the Father also. Our Lord's prayer, to be fulfilled in the day of His Glory, is that we may be, in the utmost fulness of its possible accomplishment, 'one' with Him, as 'Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them ; that they may be one, even as We are One.'<sup>1</sup> Within that transcendent circle of rest will the rest of the faithful be for ever. The unity of the Father and the Son with the Spirit, is the Bosom of Rest, within which enfolded the accepted members of the Son enter, as the result and proof of His acceptableness, which embraces not Himself only, but all who are His. Behold the repose of our wearied natures, the haven of the voyage over this troubled sea, the dwelling-place of the wanderer after his return, and his reception in his true Home ! T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures*.

### Prayer.

Help us, O most Merciful ! add to all Thy other gifts this further grace, without which all would be as nothing, that we may have increasing capacity to receive Thee, steadfastness to follow Thee, feeding on the opening Vision, till at last we shall see Thee, unveiled, face to face ; still for a little while hidden, but at length seen in Thy fulness of Glory, and ourselves made

<sup>1</sup> St. John xvii. 21, 22.



for ever one with Thee, as Thou art One with the Father, in the light that can never fade, never fail us. Amen.

T. T. CARTER.

*I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*—St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

*In Him we live and move and have our being.*—Acts xvii. 28.

IN Him we must be by the very law of our being, since out of Him we could not be, nor exist ; we must live, encircled, and enwrap, and enfolded in and by His Being ; we belong to Him, we are encompassed by Him. Every breath we draw is through Him. But more blessedly we may be in Him by grace. He is the life of our soul, the Being of our being. He wills to knit us to Himself. Not more surely does our blood circulate through our frames, than the life of our souls may flow into us continually from the Spirit of God, never decayed, ever renewed. With Him thou mayest ever be ; He will walk with thee by the way ; He will talk with thee in thy secret heart ; He will be with thee as thy Friend ; by night or by day He will not be separated from thee. He will teach thee through all who teach. Through every dispensation of His providence He will instruct thee. He will teach thee to pray by His Spirit within thee. In every trouble He will be with thee, nearer than the trouble, nearest to thy heart, for He will be within thee. He will kindle thee with love, He will strengthen thy faith, He will be Himself thy hope.

All which He gives thee now shall be the more precious, because they will not be without Himself, but will be tokens of His presence. He will be 'all in all' things to thee now, the very good of all good, the joy of all pleasure, the sweetness of all things sweet, the life of thy life. He will be the essence of all good here, that He may be thine All hereafter, when 'all' will be again 'very good,' because all will be full of Him.

E. B. PUSEY, *Parochial Sermons*.

Consider what our lives would be if, through an active co-operation with our Lord, we were faithful to our mysterious

possession of Him. What an unfolding of wondrous light, in thought, in word, in deed, in aspiration, in design, would characterise our inward nature ! What a consciousness would pervade us ! What an upholding strength sustain us ! What a companionship be felt within, what communing with our unseen Guest, if only we could always bear in mind what it is to receive God ; could think and feel and act in conformity with the conviction of His indwelling Presence, possessing and possessed, though hidden under an inscrutable veil, screened from all mortal sense !

It is not that we lose anything of our own true nature through this mysterious transformation, we are still our own true selves. Our individuality and special characteristics of being remain. All that is truly ours only becomes more intensely ours, for our true nature becomes more real. The only change is that our nature is pervaded by a life and love beyond it, transforming it into a diviner order ever more and more perfectly. And as our efforts prevail to preserve a life of stillness and repose, of faith and love, of prayer and watchfulness, and a pure intention, this diviner life in us is increasingly strengthened and enlarged. All is transformed and raised as more and more we unite ourselves with the amazing mystery of the Presence which is inhabiting our being, working out Its purposes in us, and which is already ours in Its immeasurable and inexhaustible depth of love.

T. T. CARTER, *Spiritual Instructions on the Holy Eucharist.*

The greater is our consciousness of Christ's nearness to us in this world, the greater will be our fervent expectation of the joy of His more manifest presence as it shall be vouchsafed hereafter to us, if we are faithful to Him.

O loving Jesu, draw me unto Thyself. Fit me for Thy Glory, kindle me with Thy love. As Thou feedest me with Thine own Self in order to bring me onward, grant me such fervour of devotion that I may press onward in union with Thyself to obtain the joy whereunto Thou callest me, and let the fellowship of joy with Thyself be more entrancing to me,

even amidst the weariness of earth, than all the joys of earth could be if the glow of Thy presence were withdrawn.

R. M. BENSON.

Lord of my nights and days !  
Let my desire be,  
Not to be rid of earth,  
But nearer Thee.

If I may nearer draw,  
Through lengthened grief and pain,  
Then to continue here  
Must be my gain ;

Till I have strengthened been,  
To take a wider grasp  
Of that eternal Life  
I long to clasp ;

Till I am so refined,  
I can the glory bear  
Of that excess of joy  
I thirst to share ;

Till I am meet to gaze  
On uncreated Light,  
Transformed and perfected  
By that new sight.

Sorrow's long lesson o'er,  
Death's discipline gone through,  
Thou wilt unfold to me  
What Joy can do.

Glad souls are on the wing,  
From earth to Heaven they flee :  
At last, Thine hour will come  
To send for me.

Reveal the mighty Love  
That binds Thy heart to mine :  
Thy Counsels, and my will,  
Should intertwine.

Lord of my heart and hopes !  
Let my desire be,  
Not to be rid of earth,  
But one with Thee.

C. M. NOEL.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### The Ministry of Angels.

*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation ?—Heb. i. 14.*

*Ye are come to an innumerable company of angels.—Heb. xii. 22.*

O, the exceeding grace  
Of highest God that loves His creatures so,  
And all His works with mercy doth enhance,  
That blessed Angels He sends to and fro  
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave  
To come to succour us who comfort want ;  
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave  
The flitting skies like flying pursuivant,  
Against foul fiends to aid us militant.  
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,  
And their bright squadrons round about us plant,  
And all for love, and nothing for reward :  
O, why should heavenly God to man have such regard ?

E. SPENSER.

*Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven.—St. Matt. xviii. 10.*

No Christian is so humble, but he has Angels to attend on him, if he lives by faith and love. Though they are so great, so glorious, so pure, so wonderful, that the very sight of them (if we were allowed to see them) would strike us to the earth, as it did the prophet Daniel, holy and righteous as he was ;

yet they are our 'fellow-servants' and our fellow-workers, and they carefully watch over and defend even the humblest of us, if we be Christ's . . . Persons commonly speak as if the other world did not exist now, but would after death. No, it exists now, though we see it not. It is among us and around us. Jacob was shown this in his dream. Angels were all about him, though he knew it not. And what Jacob saw in his sleep, that Elisha's servant saw as if with his eyes; and the shepherds at the time of the Nativity, not only saw, but heard. They heard the voices of those blessed spirits who praise God day and night, and whom we, in our lower state of being, are allowed to copy and to assist.

We are, then, in a world of spirits, as well as in a world of sense, and we hold communion with it, and take part in it, though we are not conscious of doing so . . . The world of spirits, though unseen, is present: present not future, not distant. It is not above the sky, it is not beyond the grave; it is now and here, the kingdom of God is among us. Of this St. Paul speaks:—'We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'<sup>1</sup> He regarded it as a practical truth, which was to influence our conduct. Not only does he speak of the world invisible, but of the duty of 'looking at' it; not only does he contrast the things of time with it, but says that their belonging to time is a reason, not for looking at, but for looking off them. Eternity was not distant because it reached to the future; nor the unseen state without its influence on us because it was impalpable.

J. H. NEWMAN, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv.

## Guardian Angels.

*The Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him,  
and delivereth them.—Psalm xxxiv. 7.*

*He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy  
ways.—Psalm xci. 11.*

THE Church has ever believed that we have a silent companion, a silent witness of all the secret movements, the secret as well as open sins, and the secret triumphs of our inner life; the Guardian Angel, whom Christ has allotted to us at our baptism, such as painters have loved to depict, guarding the steps of the pilgrim as he walks by side of precipices and pitfalls; an Angel who is ever at our side, who watches over us, and will render up our soul at death into its Master's hand. This, as it is a comforting, soothing, and most blessed thought, so it is also a great corrective to us if tempted to yield to evil. You remember those words in which the poet has tried to express some of the awe and reverence which a belief in the presence of the holy dead should inspire within us, if we really felt it—

Do we indeed desire the dead  
Should still be near us at our side?  
Is there no baseness we would hide—  
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove—  
I had such reverence for his blame—  
See with clear eye some hidden shame  
And I be lessened in his love?<sup>1</sup>

Should not such a feeling as this be ours when we once fully realise the great truth of the presence of our Guardian Angel, ever beside us, watching each action, sharing each joy and sorrow? When we go into the midst of bad surroundings we must drag him with us as an unwilling companion; he must correct us and punish us; perhaps it is from his hands that the sickness or sorrow with which God Almighty sees fit

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson, *In Memoriam*.

to inflict us, is brought upon us. What must be the anxiety, what the fear, of these holy Beings, as they see us tottering like wilful children along our dangerous path, armed with the awful gift of free-will by which we can not only resist them, but even God Almighty himself! . . . If our eyes were opened, we should see ourselves, as did the servant of Elisha, surrounded with the armies of Heaven ;<sup>1</sup> we should see our daily life, with all its cares and troubles and anxieties, stretching away, like a great ladder, into heaven, and angels ascending and descending on it.

We should be reverent, pure, holy, and good, because we love God ; because we fear His terrors and look for His glorious appearing, but also 'because of the Angels.' We should count it among the restraints, as it is undoubtedly among the consolations, of our spiritual life, that we are come 'to an innumerable company of Angels.'<sup>2</sup> And while the world in its practical Sadduceeism says that there is no Resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, we shall, in this point at least, agree with the stricter religion of the ancient Pharisee, and in faith, life, and precept, to our intense comfort, yet wholesome restraint, confess both.<sup>3</sup>

W. C. E. NEWBOLT, *Counsels of Faith and Practice.*

Stray notes of everlasting harmonies,  
Forms unsubstantial, and memorials dim,—  
Faint flittings of the gales of Paradise,  
And echoes from the songs of Cherubim ;  
To aid us are they wafted from on high ;—  
Sure we may deem that Angels linger by !

But most they love the simple virgin-heart  
That humbly strives, advancing day by day,  
In their eternal choirs to learn its part ;  
Till from these troubled waters borne away,  
It finds sure refuge in the realms of rest,  
And swells the deathless anthems of the blest.

*Lyra Sanctorum.*

<sup>1</sup> 2 K.ings vi. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xxiii. 8.



*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*—St. John i. 50, 51.

As we notice that these words were spoken to the Israelite indeed, our minds run back to Jacob lying asleep at Bethel, and seeing the wonderful sight of the ladder set up between earth and heaven, and the angels passing up and down, as he gazed . . . The Ladder is the type of our blessed Lord. Through His being made man heaven is opened ; heaven and earth are brought together. As S. Chrysostom says, when the King of Heaven came down to dwell in this world, earth became heaven. The glory, the power, the majesty of heaven stooped to take up its abode on earth. The Kingdom of Heaven, the Church of which our Blessed Lord is the King, was set up here, and so angels and men were joined together in a wonderful order. . . .

The angels of God ascend and descend upon the Son of Man. This is one of those sayings which partly unveil the wonders and mysteries and miracles of grace in the midst of which we live. . . . Christ and His Church are one. The suffering that touches the Church, it touches Christ too. He said from heaven to Saul, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' What is done to His members on earth, that our Lord counts as done to Him : 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.' He identifies Himself with us, He is in us, we are in Him. We are 'members of His body,' made out 'of His flesh and of His bones.'<sup>1</sup> So close is our union with Him that St. Paul says, even now 'we sit together in heavenly places.'<sup>2</sup>

See the angels ascend to the Son of Man. Our Lord is high above the angels in His heavenly glory, far above principalities, and powers, and every name that is named. They may soar ever higher and higher, but still above them is the man Christ Jesus. Above all the ranks of angels is One Who is our brother, One who had, who has, an earthly mother. One who has shared our weaknesses and our sorrows. Higher and

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 6.

higher the angels may soar, but our Lord is infinitely above them still. Higher and higher they may rise in knowledge, but they cannot rise to the height of His knowledge. Higher and higher they may rise towards perfection, but even higher is the wondrous perfection of Him who is the most perfect of all creatures, because in Him the creature is knit for ever to the perfection of the Creator. Higher and higher they may rise in love, as they gaze on the Glory of God, and bask in the light of His love, and gather reflections of His love into their own spirits; but even higher than their most burning love is the love of Him who is one with the Father through the bond of the Spirit of love, who lives in the communion of the Holy Ghost. Higher and higher they may rise in bliss, as ages intensify this bliss; but higher still is His bliss who is the Source and Fountain of all happiness. Surely one main cause of their happiness must be the gazing on and admiring His perfections, and the wondering at that love which has both stooped lower than their own to succour us, and soared higher in the perfection of the fulfilment of the Father's will.

So the angels ascend to the Son of Man—and then, oh, further marvel! they descend upon the Son of Man. Fresh from gazing on our Blessed Lord in His Glory, the angels come down to us who are the members of Christ. They see His likeness in us; they come forth to wait upon us, to watch round us, to shield us, because we are His, because, in working for us, they can do Him service. They are ready to keep off evil from us, because every stain of our souls is a blot upon His likeness. They guide, cheer, comfort, encourage us, because they have seen in Him what we shall one day be; for St. John says that 'we shall be like Him.' So St. Paul says that the 'worshipping spirits,' who offer their service to Him on high, are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation below. So they descend upon the Son of Man, glad to do anything for Him in His members.

But can it be that they descend upon Christ in a still more mysterious way? They find Him working in His Church. They recognise His life in the souls of the regenerate. They

adore His graces in the elect, as one might rejoice to see the likeness of a father showing itself in the features of a child. They mark the radiance of the Glory of Christ spreading over the souls of the saints as they are 'changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

And if this be so, if they hail every token of His presence about us, in us, can they fail to hail His most wonderful presence at the altar? At least, S. Chrysostom speaks with a glowing faith of angels bending and adoring around the Holy Table while the sacred mysteries are celebrated. And we at that time speak of angels and archangels as joining in our adoration.

And so, by a strange and varying reverse, they ascend to us in Him where our nature is enthroned on high; they descend to Him in us, where He dwells and imparts Himself. They adore Him there on high; they serve Him here below. And yet they adore Him here also below, and serve Him there on high.

Oh, strange union between God and man, blessed meeting of our weakness with His might, of our impurity with His spotlessness, of our death with His life! Are not these indeed greater things than Nathanael knew and saw when first he came to our Lord?

If it is much to understand that we are always in His presence, is it not far more to have Him present in us, Himself the very life of the soul; and so to have all the powers of heaven pledged to guard, and bless, and cherish us, because we are His?

R. W. RANDALL, *Life in the Catholic Church.*

To Thee all Angels cry aloud : the Heavens, and all  
the powers therein.

To Thee Cherubin and Seraphin : continually do cry,  
Holy, Holy, Holy : Lord God of Sabaoth.

Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty : of Thy glory.

*Te Deum.*

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

*Collect.*

O Everlasting God, Who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order ; Mercifully grant, that as Thy holy Angels alway do Thee service in Heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*St. Michael and All Angels.*



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### Commemoration of Saints.

*The memory of the just is blessed.*—Prov. x. 7.

THE Commemoration of Saints is one of the provisions which has been wisely made by our Church to bring home to us our connection with the invisible life ; to help us to confess that they who once lived to God live still ; to know that we are heirs not of a dead past, but of a past fresh with new lessons ; to learn that consecrated gifts become an eternal blessing ; to understand—most touching mystery—that Christ is pleased to reveal Himself little by little, ‘in many parts and in many fashions,’ in the persons of His servants. Thus it is that each saint receives and shows some trait of the perfect Manhood of his Master. And ‘we that are but parts’ can recognise in a scale suited to our weakness, now this grace and now that, according to our needs. Thus it is that slowly and through manifold energies the members show us the grandeur and beauty of the One life by which they are inspired : that we come to feel that there is a place for us also in the vast Temple which is reared through the ages on the Foundation of Christ for the glory of God. . . .

I trust that we call up in grateful memory saints whom we have known—the glory of their devoted service—to give distinctness to thanksgiving and hymn. There is not one among us whose study and whose experience may not bring some dear companion, whom he has learnt to recognise in the silent converse of books or in the stirring conflicts of duty, to swell ‘the glorious company of the Apostles,’ and ‘the goodly

fellowship of the prophets,' and 'the noble army of martyrs,' men who in these later days and in our own Church have heard a call of God and have obeyed it, men who have seen a truth of God and have interpreted it, men who have received a burden at the hands of God and in trust on Him have borne it, saints who have not been reckoned in any calendar.

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *Social Aspects of Christianity*.

*I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.—Rev. vii. 9, 10.*

WHEN we call to mind what a forlorn and desert journey for multitudes of God's saints this earthly life has been, or now is; all the bitterness which they have known to themselves, and in which no stranger has intermeddled; the unappeased hunger of so many souls after a love which they have never found; when we picture to ourselves all the youthful brows from which the fresh garlands of springing hope and joy have been early and for ever stricken: when we think of the tragedy to which multitudes of lives, showing so fairly at the outset, have presently turned; of the great tribulation through which so many pass to their rest, the fire-chariots of pain by which God's saints are so often rapt into His presence: when we contemplate a little the marvel and the mystery of all that unutterable anguish which He often suffers here to be the portion of His beloved, is it not well to be reminded that, however this may endure for the night, yet joy cometh in the morning; that there are festal palms for the weariest pilgrim of this world, and an innumerable multitude of happy palmers standing before the throne? And some of these, perhaps, we have known; some of them, it may be, were once bound up here in the same bundle of life with ourselves; and these so beautiful in their lives, so beautiful in their deaths, that only to remember that such have been, that we walked for a season with them, is a chastening, a purifying, yea, and,

however much we may miss and mourn them, a gladdening thought. And we who are struggling and contending still, shall we not praise our God for them ; that He is holding them in safest keeping, in the hollow of His Hand, in the rest of His Paradise, in the secret of His Pavilion ? Shall we not find in the very remembrance of them, a remembrance which is a communion as well, a new motive to holiness, lest in the end there should be set a great gulf between ourselves and them ? Oh that to us it may be granted to have a place with them, were it only in the outermost circle of those concentric rings of light and life and glory, which, each one nearer than the other, surround the throne, and draw joy unutterable from the Beatific Vision of Him who sits upon the Throne !

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, *Sermons New and Old*.

Who are in God's hand, and round about them thrown  
 The light invisible of a land unknown ;  
 Who are in God's hand ; in quietness can wait  
 Age, pain, and death, and all that men call Fate :—  
 What matter if thou hold thy loved ones prest  
 Still with close arms upon thy yearning breast,  
 Or with purged eyes behold them hand in hand  
 Come in a vision from that lovely land,—  
 Or only with great heart and spirit sure  
 Deserve them and await them and endure ;  
 Knowing well, no shocks that fall, no years that flee,  
 Can sunder God from these, or God from thee ;  
 No wise so far thy love from theirs can roam,  
 As past the mansions of His endless home.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS, *The Renewal of Youth*.

### Bright Memories of the Holy Dead.

ALL have an interest in the goodly band of All Saints, because all have in that endless variety of 'the just made perfect' those who once bore their likeness, the 'image of the earthly,' even as we may, with them, 'bear the image of the heavenly.' As upon them, being what we are now, that Image was once

retraced through the same sacraments and hidden operation of the Holy Spirit, so may we too, day by day, be transformed secretly into that Divine likeness which now they bear.

Whatever our peculiar trials be, many of them have passed through the same, victorious. All, whose examples kindled our early faith are there ; all are at rest from their various labours ; all have washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb ; all are at rest in Abraham's bosom, 'in peaceful abodes,' in the keeping of the Lord ; they are restored to our lost, yea, a more blissful, Paradise ; they are 'with Christ' ; behold Him by sight, not by faith ; joy in His countenance ; see light in His Light ; have begun their endless praise of God. Yea, it is to be hoped that all of us have a still closer interest there ; all, in some gone before, have their portion in Paradise, all have some who long for and await their coming, in patience, hope, and peace, and prayer ; all have some link of human affection with the unseen world ; all, some treasure there, that their hearts may the rather be there also. . . .

In their peace we forget for a while this world's feverishness ; in their rest, our own faithless disquietudes for ourselves or those whom God has lent us, or for the Church of God ; and we long for purity such as theirs, and the day when we too shall be wholly cleansed ; we long with their praises to mingle ours, and for the time to praise God less imperfectly, as feeling ourselves in communion with those who praise Him perfectly, and, being joined, as we confess, 'with Angels and Archangels and all the company of Heaven,' catch for the while some faint but cheering gleam of their undying fervour. It is good to find ourselves 'in the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, amid an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn which are written in heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect' ;<sup>1</sup> to feel that we are one Church with them, though we in weakness, they in strength ; we hard-beset by foes, they conquerors ; we seeing in a glass darkly, they face to face ; we weighed down by 'the body of this death,' they freed ; we imperfect,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 22.



they perfected ; we in the land of the shadow of death, they in the land of the living ; the issues of our conflict uncertain, they, in peace, awaiting their crown.

E. B. PUSEY, *St. Saviour's Sermons*.

Let us live as if they were still with us in the flesh ; let us make ourselves meet to enjoy the fulness of communion with them hereafter. Oh, let us bless God for their examples ; let us pray to Him for strength to emulate their self-denial, for grace to follow after their meek wisdom, for courage patiently and hopefully to labour in the service of God, even as they laboured—to live as they lived, and to die as they died. And then, when we too are called to our God ; when the pilgrimage of life is over ; when the heat and burden of the day have been bravely borne ; when the watching eyes are closing in slumber, and the weary head is at rest, may we pass into their blessed company, and with them in hope and bliss await the hour for which the angels are longing, and the Church praying, and all material creation groaning and travailing <sup>1</sup>—the hour when the mystical number of the elect shall be completed, the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed, and the kingdoms of the world become the Kingdoms of Christ. ‘And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.’ <sup>2</sup>

BISHOP ELLICOTT, *The Destiny of the Creature*.

These, O God, are the fruits of Thy Spirit. Thou honour-est them in heaven with Thy approving smile ; we will honour them on earth, not merely with our lips, but in our lives. What these persons were, we too might be if we were as true as they to the inspirations of Thy Holy Spirit. Help us to honour their memories, as Thou and as they would have us do, by following their example ; by setting them before us—and not them only, but every holy and noble personage of whom we have ever heard, as dim likenesses of Christ—even as Christ is the likeness of Thee.

C. KINGSLEY, *From Death unto Life*.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxi. 3.

Then let us be content in spirit, though  
 We cannot walk, as we are fain to do,  
 Within the solemn shadow of our griefs  
 For ever ; but must needs come down again  
 From the bright skirts of those protecting clouds,  
 To tread the common paths of earth anew.  
 Then let us be content to leave behind us  
 So much ; which yet we leave not quite behind :  
 For the bright memories of the holy dead,  
 The blessed ones departed, shine on us  
 Like the pure splendours of some clear large star,  
 Which pilgrims, travelling onward, at their backs  
 Leave, and at every moment see not now,  
 Yet, whensoever they list, may pause and turn,  
 And with its glories gild their faces still ;  
 Or as beneath a northern sky is seen  
 The sunken sunset glowing in the west,  
 A tender radiance there surviving long,  
 Which has not faded all away, before  
 The flaming banners of the morn advance  
 Over the summits of the Orient hills.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, *Elegiac Poems*.

*Prayer.*

We bless Thy holy Name, O Lord, for all Thy servants  
 departed this life in Thy faith and fear ; beseeching Thee to  
 give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them  
 we may be partakers of Thy Heavenly Kingdom : Grant this,  
 O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advo-  
 cate. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer.*

## CHAPTER XIX.

### The Cloud of Witnesses.

*Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord.*—Isaiah xliii. 10.

*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*—Heb. xii. 1, 2.

EVERY great Christian life has elevated and purified the conscience of Christendom, has cleared the atmosphere in which we have to live and act. It is ours now to contribute to this noblest work of the witnesses of Christ, by our faith in Him and following in His steps. And so doing, our service ends not with our earthly life. Comes the hour when we too can no longer labour in the sight of men? That hour places us amongst those who bear record. Whether it shall be our lot to have any cognisance of the struggle of the militant Church on earth from behind the veil, so as to mark the effects of our own age upon the next, God knoweth. Enough, surely, if the voices of our lives swell in the ear of Him Who made us—the accordant testimony of the great cloud of witnesses, of which by dying we ourselves become a portion.

BISHOP WOODFORD, *Sermons on New Testament Subjects.*

The Apostle tells us that the 'cloud of witnesses' compasses us about, that they are about us and around—nay, among us, that they wrap us up as a cloud. Bright and numerous, but, unknown, like the countless stars of the summer night, which the child looks up to, not knowing that

they are stars, but thinking them a soft milk-white cloud. Calm and peaceful are they ; their race is done, their work is finished ; they are at rest from their labours. Once they toiled in the battlefield of life ; once they were tried in the furnace of affliction, or with the soft eating mildew of prosperity ; once they perhaps stood in the fires of persecution, and boldly bore their testimony to the name of Christ, and went joyfully to prison or to death for the sake of the Lord they loved. Or, it may be, theirs was the humble lot ; the hidden trial ; the secret combat day by day with old and cherished sins ; the struggle against remorse, that would tell them repentance was too late, or that God's mercy was no more. The constant doing for the sake of Christ of little things against which taste and inclination rebelled ; giving up their own way ; putting themselves out to help another ; denying themselves the possession of some wished-for object, or checking the exhibition of some talent, because experience told them it was a snare to themselves, or Christian tact, that it would hurt another. And through all the petty scenes of mortification, and all the little crosses which make up a modern Christian's martyrdom, they still had faith that stayed upon their God ; still felt that, so they bore what Christ sent them, they were in the path of safety, whether God called them to little sufferings or to great ; still persevered in the uninteresting round of common things, making love shed a bright light over all their life, and finding in every shadow the shadow of the Cross, still persevering to the end in union with Him who loved them, died for them, and lives in them, even ' Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith.'

G. C. HARRIS, *Church Seasons and Present Times.*

They animate us by their example ; they cheer us by their company ; they are on our right hand and our left, Martyrs, Confessors, and the like, high and low, who used the same creeds, and celebrated the same mysteries, and preached the same Gospel as we do. And to them were joined, as ages went on, even in fallen times, nay, even now in times of division, fresh and fresh witnesses from the Church below. In the world



of spirits there is no difference of parties. It is our plain duty indeed here, to contend even for the details of the Truth according to our light, and surely there is a Truth in spite of the discordance of opinions. But that Truth is at length simply discerned by the spirits of the just; human additions, human institutions, human enactments, enter not with them into the unseen state. They are put off with the flesh. Greece and Rome, England and France, give no colour to those souls which have been cleansed in the One Baptism, nourished by the One Body, and moulded upon the One Faith. Adversaries agree together directly they are dead, if they have lived and walked in the Holy Ghost. The harmonies combine and fill the temple, while discords and imperfections die away. Therefore is it good to throw ourselves into the unseen world: it is 'good to be there,' and to build tabernacles for those who speak 'a pure language' and 'serve the Lord with one consent'; not indeed to draw them forth from their secure dwelling-places, not superstitiously to honour them, or wilfully to rely on them, lest they be a snare to us, but silently to contemplate them for our edification; thereby encouraging our faith, enlivening our patience, sheltering us from thoughts about ourselves, keeping us from resting in ourselves, and making us seem to ourselves (what really we ought ever to be) only followers of the doctrine of those who have gone before us, not teachers of novelties, not founders of schools.

God grant to us all, out of the superabundant treasures of His grace, such a spirit, the spirit of mingled teachableness and zeal, of calmness in inquiry and vigour in resolve, of power, and of love, and of a sound mind!

J. H. NEWMAN, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*.<sup>1</sup>

Remembering the presence of these unseen witnesses, and conscious of their knowledge in some way of what is taking place here below—although we have no assurance that they could even hear us, if we tried to speak to them—we have to 'run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii.

Jesus,' their Lord and our Lord : 'looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith,' Who begins our life of faith in this world, and completes it in His Paradise. 'For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we sleep or wake, we should live together with Him,'<sup>1</sup> Who is the 'Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,' the 'Author and Finisher,' of the Christian Life.

BISHOP WEBB.

### Prayer.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, of Thy great goodness, to accept our praises and thanksgivings for all Thy faithful servants who, having witnessed in their lives a good confession, have left the light of their good works to shine before Thy Church on earth. Mercifully grant that we, being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, may lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith : that so, departing this life with the seal of faith, we may attain unto the resurrection of the just, and with them enjoy the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

H. STOBART.

While they here sojourn'd, their presence drew us

By the sweetness of their human love ;

Day by day good thoughts of them renew us,

Like fresh tidings from the world above.

Coming like the stars at gloamin' glinting

Through the western clouds, when loud winds cease,

Silently of that calm country hinting,

Where they with the angels are at peace.

Not their own, ah ! not from earth was flowing

That high strain to which their souls were tuned,

Year by year we saw them inly growing

Liker Him with Whom their hearts communed.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.

Then to Him they pass'd ; but still unbroken,  
Age to age, lasts on that goodly line,  
Whose pure lives are, more than all words spoken,  
Earth's best witness to the life divine.

Subtlest thought shall fail, and learning falter,  
Churches change, forms perish, systems go,  
But our human needs, they will not alter,  
Christ no after-age shall e'er outgrow.

Yea, Amen ! O changeless One, Thou only  
Art life's guide and spiritual goal,  
Thou the Light across the dark vale lonely,—  
Thou the eternal haven of the soul !

J. C. SHAIRP.

*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.*—2 Cor. ix. 15.

PART II.

LIFE THROUGH DEATH





## CHAPTER I.

### Death.

*He will swallow up death in victory.*—Isaiah xxv. 8.

*He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*—Phil. ii. 8.

*O death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ?*

*The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*—1 Cor. xv. 55-7.

‘ WHAT is the significance of Death ? ’

Clearly Death is a fact ; a fact of intimate and universal interest ; it is true of us all, we must die.

And common as is the truth, it is of ever-recurring and special importance to remember that it is a fact of which we have had no sort of experience, and yet such that it is certain of us all. In a world of infinite possibilities, and therefore of immeasurable uncertainties ; . . . in a world in which no set of circumstances, that is, no state of the relations of time and place with *each* soul, are precisely the same ; in a world in which new landscapes, so to speak, are ever being unfolded before the astonished eye ; in a world like this it is no trifling matter of which it can be said—*this* at least is certain. Of one fact it is well to remember *that* saying is undeniably reliable ; certainly we shall die. Here, at least, is one feature in the face of death which commands attention and awe. There is another. Death is the consummation of the tragedy of Change. All things are moving on. The universe, in its immensity transcending the grasp even of imaginative thought, has its share in this mysterious truth. No atom of matter perishes, but all are victims to the inexorable necessity of

moving on. The changes are what we call slow. So slow—that is, on such a scale of immensity beyond the scale of our ordinary reckoning—that we scarcely notice them, and we are even tempted to doubt. Holy Scripture, in Genesis especially, is so impressed with this truth that at times its statements seem incredible, until the wiser eyes of deep spiritual thinkers notice the careful accuracy of the hints it gives—words of wisdom so deep that they are also simple, so full that they satisfy the wisest, as they charm the little child. . . .

Slowly they pass these cycles of unresting change ; slowly the rivers glide through sleeping corn-lands, roll down their rocky channels, and sweep into the sea ; slowly the day advances, gathers dimness, passes into night ; slowly the night creeps on into the ocean of increasing brightness, and is lost and engulfed in the glories of the dawn. All is changing—we ourselves among the many facts that people this mysterious life. To-day seems not at all unlike our yesterday, to-morrow will probably be strangely like to-day ; but when years have passed, some opposing fact—like a sudden sound at midnight, a bird blown against the rain-resounding pane, the whisper of a scared voice in our ear—awakens us to fuller consciousness, and then we find, however gradually, that *we* too have changed.

Stay ; again we meet the mystery of a constant fact. Personality remains ; years, effects, events, hopes, persons flit past as in the mystic march of life, but *we* remain.

It is one of the saddening puzzling truths of every life, the fact of change. . . . Change upon change is the sad law of this mortal pilgrimage ; the tears may start, hearts, loving hearts, may ache in sorrow, and break with partings, but change and partings come.

Now, Death is the crown of change. All other changes are as nothing compared with this. To pass into wholly altered, wholly untried conditions ; to lose our foothold on the sands of Time ; to fail from the presence of our former selves ; to know that *the* moment is approaching when we shall be face to face with the Unknown ;—this surely strikes the strongest heart with awe is it unmanly to say with fear ?

There is a tragic strain in every life when, taking account of so much that has been full of love, and joy, and happiness, we say, 'It can never be again.' That tragic strain is heard in its deepest chords, in its fullest, most heart-rending music, in the mystery of Death.

Once again, whatever be the meaning lying beyond, Death in one sense is unparalleled catastrophe. The ancients have been imagined by some to be better off than ourselves in view of Death, but here we are side by side. When they thought of it at all, they gazed shuddering at a world of gloom. To them it was altogether shrouded in the robes of night. . . .

We Christians feel, in a sense, the same. Did you ever take from your shelves a long-closed volume, and shake out from its pages, unawares, a letter, bearing the vivid expression of energy and life and love, written by a dear, dead hand? Why do you start? Why for a moment are you all unmanned? Why does the poignancy of a buried grief rise up and stab you sharply as the day he died? Every word speaks clear and plain off that inexorably faithful paper; every pen-stroke carries in itself the mysterious presence of a once *felt* character. 'Littera scripta manet,' yes, 'remains,' but only to mock you. 'Where is he?' 'How does he feel to *me*?' 'Shall we meet again?' 'Shall we be to each other what once we were?' Whatever answer comes, this, *this* is certain:—what once was is not, and can be no more, and your first agony of human love declares there is no sadness like *this* sadness. Death is an unparalleled catastrophe.

Think one moment more. On your table you have the portrait of your wife, your child, your friend. Are they near you? You scarcely care to look at it. Why? Because that sweet presence is about the house. Absence comes, if I may use so bold a phrase; seas or continents divide you, you love the portrait better, for absence is the first, faint, saddening image of the great 'farewell.' Let the grave divide. You cannot bear to part with that portrait now. In vacant hours, in moments of the pauses of your work, half-unconsciously your eye wanders to yon picture. It is all that you have left



you of what was once so dear, so fair ; it is the outward symbol of a treasured memory. That glance of yours is the homage of human love and anguish to the majesty and awfulness of Death.

If such thoughts were only the outcome of that poisonous thing—sickly sentiment—they could but tend to debilitate the character, if they did not lead to something worse. They would be unquestionably wrong if they were *only* weakening. They are strong, and true, and human, face to face with Christ. . . .

It is false, it is foolhardy to say Death is not terrible. It *is* terrible. It is always sad. But we dare not view it merely in the light of human feeling. We Christians are placed by a miracle of love in a new sphere of being. And if our Christianity be no dream, but, as it is, a grand reality, we must view all objects, even this saddening spectacle, in the light and atmosphere of the New Creation. We are ‘in Christ,’ and Christ has died. Remembering this, I ask in an altogether happier temper, ‘What is the significance of Death?’

Certainly death, even ‘in Christ,’ is a punishment for sin. It is the inevitable penance of the sinning though repentant soul. Yes ! it is the severe penalty to be paid by all. The good and beautiful, the young and fair, each, all must enter this dusky portal, and face the solemn mystery alone. But as surely also, ‘in Christ,’ it takes a touch from the Passion, a power from the Precious Blood.

‘Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.’ Ah ! we cannot doubt it—that great mystery has for souls that seek Him some purifying, some almost sacramental efficacy ; because Christ died, Death has in great measure *changed its meaning*.

What is the significance of Death ? Death in Christ is an accident in immortality. The great Unity of Life lasts on. The immortal life knows no break in its continuity, only *here* it is a life sin-stained, sorrow-laden ; *there*, sin is gone and sorrow ended, when ‘in Christ’ the living spirit passes the gates of the grave.

And further, one of the bitterest pangs of life is the pang of the parting of friends. Now, death 'in Christ' is the entrance to a land where partings are no more.

It is rest from labour, it is the close of struggle, it is the sleep of the blessed, it is the fulfilment of the earthly pilgrimage; it is indeed solemn, for it is the opening of an eternal future, but it is the passage to the Audience Chamber, it is admission to the unimagined blessedness of the Presence of Christ. . . .

To live in Faith is to prepare to die. Christ by His death has given us a ground of confidence in His unflagging tenderness, and it is devotion to a person, it is faith in Jesus Christ which, as it conquers the world, so it subdues the grave. . . .

Yes, it is sad to die. But resignation to the great and loving will of God, and faith in His promise and His power, if they do not destroy the sadness which must accompany our human life, which must stand with us by the grave, at least they prepare us to bear the trial with unflinching courage and supporting hope. . . .

To live in a manful and abiding sorrow for sin; to aspire with increasing efforts towards our great Ideal; to grow in the self-sacrificing love which makes the life of each a rich inheritance for all; to deepen in a steadfast trust in the Father, Who is revealed to us in the tender love of the Divine and Human Son; this is to rob death of its terrors, this is to tread the rough and splendid path of the Passion. This is to enter into the meaning of that great assurance—'O death of Christ, the death of death to me!'

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *The Mystery of the Passion.*

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesu Christ, to Whom only we belong in life and in death; grant that we may so live now that we may never be unprepared to die. Forsake us not, O Lord, in our last hour, and when Thou callest us, do Thou confirm our faith, deepen

our repentance, and strengthen us with Thy most blessed Body and Blood. Let Thy holy Angels then be with us to shield us from temptation, to comfort us in suffering, to support us in our last agony; may they receive our souls cleansed from all offences, and place us among Thy Saints and Elect, where light abides and life reigns; world without end. Amen.

*The Treasury of Devotion.*

## Death, the Close of Struggle.

*Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me,  
O Lord, thou God of Truth.—Psalm xxxi. 6.*

MANY look with terror to the approaching crisis of death. Why should it be so regarded? It will be but the accomplishment of what long ago was wrought in us in mystery. It will be but the closing struggle of the spirit, our true life, against the flesh, the cause of our suffering and our sin. It will be only the putting off for ever of the last hold which Satan has over us, through the lusts of the flesh. It will be but the merciful separating off of what has been so long renounced; the laying in a peaceful slumber, to be refashioned, what has been so long a snare, a burden, an occasion of enmity to God, a hindrance to 'all that is pure and lovely.' The flesh cannot be reformed till it is dissolved. It is condemned as irreclaimable in itself. It may be subdued, regulated, and chastened; it cannot be fashioned after the image of Christ, till it is put off, and swallowed up of life. 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die,'<sup>1</sup> and death is but the last and crowning act of the long and many self-sacrifices in each of which the new-born spirit has exulted.

Should we not then welcome death, even with all its sorrows, as that of which all our Christian life has been a delighted anticipation? It is through death, and death only, that our spiritual nature can breathe freely, and go forth like the 'bird

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 10.

out of the snare of the fowler, to live in perfect freedom its own true life.

The trials, whether of body or of spirit, which gradually wear our life away, are God's own chosen means of fulfilling what we have already professed to be our true vocation. They are the necessary accomplishment of that sentence on the flesh which, ever since we knew Christ, has been the object of our fondest desire that, dying with Him, we may rise with Him; that, through the daily Cross, the daily resurrection may be ours; that 'the sentence of death' being in us, the power of the Divine life may triumph in us. Shall we murmur at these strokes, which are verily the unloosening of the bonds to set the captive spirit free? Shall we regret the gradual decay, which is but the passing off of the gloom of the night before the dawn of the everlasting Day? Would we check the progress of our dissolution, if we could? All that bows the vigour of our fleshly frame, all that consumes away the spirits and strength of the sensitive soul, are in truth but the travail-pangs of the perfected deliverance of the Divine Nature struggling within us, for its heavenly development. Be not, then, unwilling to yield up the flesh to this slowly-advancing death, which must increase until its end be accomplished, 'until the day break, and the shadows flee away.' T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures*.

He who has conquered death in His own person, will supply whatever may be our personal need at the moment of death. . . .

The soul has many needs in dying, but it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which supplies them all. Forgotten foes, old sins that have long been lain aside, fresh forms of evil that mock us, coming up for the first time, pains of the body, cravings of the soul, memories, present consciousness, hopes and fears, all have their needs; but Jesus has conquered death in His own person, when it assailed Him with all the accumulated violence that it could gather against mankind, and He who conquered lives in us to conquer still. He will make for



us the way of escape that we may be able to bear it. He will give us the special grace by which we may best be strengthened, so that in all these things we may 'gain the more exceeding victory through Him that loved us.' Earthly acquisitions we must leave behind, but the graces whereby we are enabled to triumph in death over each special assault of the enemy are the bright dawn of the new day. O let us trust in Jesus ! 'My God shall supply all thy need.' When we see death far away, we fear, for we cannot see Jesus in the distance ; but when death is close before us, and Jesus holds us up, then can we fear no more. 'O Lord in Thee have I trusted : let me never be confounded.'

O Jesu ! Thou knowest my weakness more than I know myself. I ask not to be saved from any need, but I give myself to Thee that all my need may be supplied by Thee. Let every need turn to Thy greater glory in the manifestation of Thy love : so will I praise Thee for all. Thou never failest any. Surely though I am weak, yea because I am weak, according to the need which this my weakness brings, I know that Thou wilt not fail me. R. M. BENSON, *Spiritual Readings*.

### Prayer.

Hear me, O Lord, and remember now that hour, in which Thou didst once commend Thy blessed spirit into the hands of Thy heavenly Father : when, with a torn body and a broken heart, Thou didst show forth Thy mercy and die for us. I beseech Thee, O Thou Brightness and Image of God, so to assist me by this Thy most precious death, that, being dead unto the world, I may live only unto Thee ; and at the last hour of my departing from this mortal life I may commend my soul into Thy hands, and Thou mayest receive me into life immortal, there to reign with Thee for ever and ever. Amen.

BISHOP COSIN.

**A Thought for a lonely Death-bed.**

If God compel thee to this destiny,  
To die alone with none beside thy bed,  
To ruffle round with sobs thy last word said,  
And mark with tears the pulses ebb from thee,—  
Pray then alone O Christ, come tenderly !  
By Thy forsaken Sonship in the red  
Drear wine-press,—by the wilderness outspread,—  
And the lone garden where 'Thine agony  
Fell bloody from Thy brow,—by all of those  
Permitted desolations, comfort mine !  
No earthly friend being near me, interpose  
No deathly angel 'twixt my face and Thine,  
But stoop Thyself to gather my life's rose,  
And smile away my mortal to Divine !

E. B. BROWNING.

## CHAPTER II.

### The Sleep of Death.

*I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.—1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.*

ONE great miracle in the new creation of God is this, that death is changed to sleep ; and therefore in the writings of the New Testament we do not read of the ‘death’ of the saints.

St. Paul in the text speaks of the saints unseen as of those that ‘sleep in Jesus’ ; and Christians were wont to call their burial-grounds cemeteries, or sleeping-places, where they laid up their beloved ones to sleep on and take their rest. Let us see why we should thus speak of those whom we call dead.

First, it is because we know that they shall awake up again. What sleep is to waking, death is to the resurrection. It is only a prelude, a transitory state, ushering in a mightier power of life ; therefore death is called sleep, to show that it has a fixed end coming. . . .

Again, death is changed to sleep, because they whom men call dead do really live unto God. They were dead while they lived this dying life on earth, and dead when they were in the last avenues of death. But after they had once died, death had no more dominion : they escaped as a ‘bird out of the snare of the fowler’ ; the snare ‘was’ broken, and they were delivered.

It may sound strange to unbelieving ears to say that we are dead while we live, and alive when we die. But so it is. Life does not hang on matter, nor on organisation of matter.

It is not as the harmony which rings out of a cunning instrument ; but it is a breath, a spirit, a ray of the eternal being, pure, immaterial, above all grosser compounds, simple and indissoluble. In the body it is allayed and tempered with weakness, shrouded about with obstructions ; its faculties pent up by a bounded organisation, and its energies repressed by the 'body of this death.' It is life subjected to the conditions of mortality. But, once dead, once dissolved, and the unclothed spirit is beyond the affections of decay. There is no weakness, nor weariness, nor wasting away, nor wandering of the burdened spirit ; it is disenthralled, and lives its own life, unmingled, and buoyant. When the coil of this body is loosed, death has done all and his power is spent ; thenceforth and for ever the sleeping soul lives mightily unto God.

Those whom the world calls dead are sleeping, because they are taking their rest. 'I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth. Even so saith the Spirit ; for they rest from their labours.' Not as the heretics of old vainly and coldly dreamed, as if they slept without stir of consciousness from the hour of death to the morning of the resurrection. Their rest is not the rest of a stone, cold and lifeless ; but of wearied humanity. They rest from their labours ; they have no more persecution, nor stoning, nor scourging ; no more martyrdoms ; they have no more false witness, nor cutting tongues ; no more bitterness of heart, nor iron entering into the soul ; no more burdens of wrong, nor amazement, nor perplexity. Never again shall they weep for unkindness, and disappointment, and withered hopes, and desolation of heart. All is over now ; they have passed under the share. The ploughers ploughed upon their back, and made long furrows ; but it is all over, never to begin again. They rest too from the weight of 'the body of our humiliation'—from its sufferings and pains. Their last sickness is over. . . . Now is their weariness changed into refreshment ; their weakness into excellence of strength ; their wasting into a spirit ever new ; their broken words into the perfection of praise ; their weeping into a chant of bliss. And not only so, but they rest



also from their warfare against sin, against all its strength, and subtilties, and snares. . . . There is no more inward struggle, no sliding back again, no swerving aside, no danger of falling; they have gained the shore of eternal peace. Above all they rest from the buffetings of evil in themselves. It is not persecution, nor oppression, nor the thronging assaults of temptation, that so afflict a holy man, as the consciousness that evil dwells in his own inmost soul. It is the clinging power of spiritual evil that sullies his whole being: it seems to run through him in every part; it cleaves to every movement of his life; his living powers are burdened and bruised by its grasp. Evil tempers in sudden flashes, unholy thoughts shooting across the soul and kindling fires in the imagination, thoughts of self in holiest seasons, consciousness of self in holiest acts, in devoutness of spirit, earthliness of heart, dull musing heaviness in the life of God—all these burden even saints with an oppressive weight. They feel always the stretch and tension of their spiritual frame, as a man that is weary and breathless grappling with a foe whom, if he would live, he must hold powerless to the earth. But from all this, too, they rest. The sin that dwelt in them died, when through death they began to live. The unimpeded soul puts forth its new-born life, as a tree in a kindly soil invited by a gentle sky: all that checked it is passed away; all that draws it into ripeness bathes it with fostering power. . . .

Blessed and happy dead! In them the work of the new creation is well-nigh accomplished. What feebly stirs in us, in them is well-nigh full. They have passed within the veil, and there remaineth only one more change for them—a change full of a foreseen, foretasted bliss. How calm, how pure, how sainted, are they now! A few short years ago, and they were almost as weak and poor as we: harassed by temptations, often overcome weeping in bitterness of soul, struggling, with faithful though fearful hearts, towards that dark shadow from which they shrank as we shrink now. . . . Let us be much in thought with them that are at rest. They await our coming; for without us they shall 'not be





THE  
HAPPY  
DEATH

made perfect.'<sup>1</sup> Let us therefore remember, and love, and follow them ; that when our last change is over, we, with them, may 'sleep in Jesus.'

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.<sup>2</sup>

Happy is that Christian who falls asleep with his Lord's work in his hand.

BURKITT.

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Who hast commanded us to watch and pray and to be always ready, keep us ever mindful of the uncertainty of life, and of the account we are one day to give, that when we depart hence we may sleep in Thee, and at Thy appearing may rise again to dwell with Thee for ever ; Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest ever one God, world without end. Amen.

SCUDAMORE.

*He giveth His beloved sleep.*—Psalm cxxvii. 3.

*She is not dead but sleepeth.*—St. Matt. ix. 24.

THUS kindly and hopefully does that kindest and most hopeful Voice that ever stirred the atmosphere of this world speak of our last change. And oh, how the very nature of death is changed when we thus think of it ! Not the gloomy visitor, coming so unwelcome : but the kindly gift of our kind Saviour gently soothing us to rest. When all is said, our hearts will never be quite free from troubles, fears, anxieties, forebodings here : our feeble faith, and our many sins clouding God's face, will make sure of *that* : but in that last repose we shall, if we be Christ's people, sleep into forgetfulness of all these. We never shall know a real, sound, untroubled sleep in this world till *that*—till the weary head is laid upon the bosom of its God ! 'After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.' How literally, how gloriously true, the great poet's words are of the true believer ! Let us bless God for the pleasant thought of death which is given us by this gracious text ; we need it all. Gently as a mother soothes her weary infant, the kind Saviour

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i.



calms away all our cares, all our fears and forebodings, in that perfect rest. We call to our remembrance the lowliness of death ; we stand by the last bed : we see the weakness of mortality : we mark the sad signs of dissolution ; and who that has ever seen them but knows how sad they are to see ; but what a change comes over all *that*, over the parting breath, over the still face when the last pain is over, when we think it is but that God has 'given His beloved sleep,' and gently soothed the unquiet heart to the dreamless rest of a child ! He *giveth* it ; it is not as if it were sent by even the sublimest messenger ; He comes Himself ; He stands by His departing brother ; it is He himself that composes the weary heart and closes the glazing eye. Not the fatal disease ; not the days and nights of weakness and suffering ; not those long years, perhaps, which have silvered the head and worn out the machinery of mortal life : look beyond these : there is a higher Hand here. 'Surely God giveth His beloved sleep.'

Yes, to His beloved. To those washed in Christ's blood and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Let us pray earnestly that all of us may be so. Let us pray that we may all be led and enabled unfeignedly to love and trust Him as we see Him in Christ ; and so that we may be loved by Him ; by Him Who first loved us,—Who sought us in the wilderness when we had wandered away and were lost, and brought the wanderer home to His fold. And then, passing from this life,—closing our eyes upon this world of trouble, we shall sleep in Jesus, we shall win the peace of God ! And in that rest which remaineth for all His people, we shall be far away from all weariness, all anxiety, all care, all sorrow. And while the soul shall pass to God, to enter on the rest of glory, the mortal body has its rest no less, sleeping peacefully till the Resurrection day . . . And if we leave behind us those who may sometimes visit the quiet spot, what better can we wish than that they may be able to say, humbly and hopefully,—Surely here, at last and surely there, in a better place ; the weary heart and hand are still ; yea, surely God 'hath given His beloved sleep.'

*The Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson.*

Prayer.

O God of Mercy, grant that when we lie down in the last long calm sleep of death we may commit ourselves trustfully into Thy hands, and that on the morning of the Resurrection we, with all Thy faithful departed, may be perfected in that day when Thou makest up Thy jewels. Of Thy Mercy, O our God, Who art blessed and livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

E. VAUX.

The Sleep.

OF all the thoughts of God that are  
 Borne inward into souls afar,  
 Along the Psalmist's music deep,  
 Now tell me if that any is  
 For gift or grace surpassing this—  
 'He giveth His beloved, sleep'?

What would we give to our beloved?  
 The hero's heart to be unmoved,  
 The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,  
 The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,  
 The monarch's crown to light the brows?—  
 He giveth His beloved, sleep.

What do we give to our beloved?  
 A little faith all undisproved,  
 A little dust to overweep,  
 And bitter memories to make  
 The whole earth blasted for our sake :  
 He giveth His beloved, sleep.

‘Sleep soft, beloved !’ we sometimes say,  
Who have no tune to charm away  
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep :  
But never doleful dream again  
Shall break the happy slumber when  
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises !  
O men, with wailing in your voices !  
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap !  
O strife, O curse, that o’er it fall !  
God strikes a silence through you all,  
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill,  
His cloud above it saileth still,  
Though on its slope, men sow and reap :  
More softly than the dew is shed,  
Or cloud is floated overhead,  
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

Aye, men may wonder while they scan  
A living, thinking, feeling man  
Confirmed in such a rest to keep ;  
But Angels say, and through the word  
I think their happy smile is *heard*—  
‘He giveth his beloved, sleep.’

For me, my heart that erst did go  
Most like a tired child at a show,  
That sees through tears the mummers leap,  
Would now its wearied vision close,  
Would childlike on His love repose  
Who giveth His beloved, sleep.

And friends, dear friends, when it shall be  
That this low breath is gone from me,  
And round my bier ye come to weep,  
Let One, most loving of you all,  
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall !  
He giveth His belovèd, sleep.'

E. B. BROWNING.



## CHAPTER III.

### Separation.

*He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn.—Isaiah lxi. 2.*

*It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.*

*For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Rom. viii.*

*35, 37-39.*

WE know that they are not leaving us who are to remain behind, for ever, but a little while preceding us who are soon to follow.

They are not lost whom we love in Him whom we cannot lose.

S. AUGUSTINE.

Those who love in the Lord never see each other for the last time.

*Author unknown.*

WHEN any true servants of Christ's are taken away, what is it but a token of His favourable acceptance of their self-oblation? They have been His from baptism, and He has granted them a long season of tarrying in this outer court of His temple. But now, at length, the time is come; and when we see them 'bow the head, and give up the ghost,' is it not our slowness of heart that makes even our eyes also to be holden, so as not to see Who is standing nigh, conforming

them to His own great Sacrifice? While they were with us they were not ours, but His : they were permitted to abide with us, and to gladden our hearts a while ; but they were living sacrifices, and ever at the point of being caught up to heaven.

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.<sup>1</sup>

Death has made  
His darkness beautiful with thee.

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*.

And in the sooty dawn I woke alone ;  
And every day I wake alone and know  
No joy of life will come again. O Christ,  
I cannot reach Thee, I am ignorant !  
Thou sentest once Thy saint to succour me  
In my extremity, and when he left  
Me in this world, he left me in Thy charge :  
Now therefore for his sake remember me,  
And be Thyself my Friend that he is gone.  
Though in this world I may not see Thy Face—  
This world that must be dark for me till death—  
Yet through the darkness hold me by the hand,  
That when I meet him, I may meet Thee too.'

E. H. KING, *Ugo Bassi*.

### Prayer.

O gracious Father, enable Thy servants to bow before Thee in humble submission to Thy Divine appointment. Draw them, we pray Thee, unto Thyself, that while they mourn the loss of *him* they so much loved, they may obtain consolation in the fuller knowledge of that love of Thine which at the first provided for them so great an earthly blessing, and is now effectual to supply the place of every gift which Thy wisdom removes ; and grant them, when this life of trial is ended, to find with *him*, who has been taken from them, a merciful judgment in the last Day, and a joyful entrance into Thy glory. Through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*From ' The Waiting Church.'*

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i.

## The Will of God.

*Father, not my will, but Thine be done.*—St. Luke xxii. 42.

BE this our rule in action, ‘not what I will, but what Thou’; this, in suffering, ‘not what I, but what Thou.’ This shall hallow our hopes, this shall hush our fears, this shall ward off disquiet, this shall still our displeasures, this shall preserve our peace, this shall calm anxieties, this shall soothe our aching hearts, this shall give repose to our weariness, this (the deeper our trouble) shall be the deeper foretaste of Everlasting Peace and Rest. For it shall ‘transfuse our will into His supreme Good Pleasure,’ and we shall be ‘the friends of God’<sup>1</sup>: for friends have but one will; yea, we shall be changed into ‘one Spirit with’ Him, sinking our own bounded will in His, receiving into ourselves His Almighty Will.

‘Lord, Thou knowest and canst and wilt what is best for my soul; I, wretched man that I am, neither know, nor can, nor, as I ought, will it; do Thou, O Lord, of Thine unspeakable goodness, so order and dispose of me as seemeth good to Thee, and as is best for me’;<sup>2</sup> and His goodness is pledged to provide for thee, His wisdom to counsel for thee, His power to uphold thee, His love to receive thee. ‘Lord, not what I will, but what Thou’; not what I, in my misery, and ignorance, and blindness, and sin, but what Thou, in Thy Mercy, and Holiness, and Wisdom, and Love. ‘For what were it but Life Eternal, with our whole affections, to follow, in all things, the Will of God?’<sup>3</sup>

E. B. PUSEY.

### Prayer.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we humbly beseech Thee to grant that, as Thine Only-begotten Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, according to His blessed will, suffered willingly Death and bitter Passion for our salvation; so we, in like manner, whensoever it may be Thy pleasure to lay like cross

<sup>1</sup> St. John xv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Andrewes.

<sup>3</sup> S. Bernard.

and affliction upon us, may also willingly and patiently bear it, in the trial of our faith for the latter day, unto Thine everlasting glory. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever One God, world without end. Amen. *From the 'Priest's Prayer-Book.'*

For us, whatever's undergone,  
Thou knowest, willest what is done.  
Grief may be joy misunderstood ;  
Only the Good discerns the good.  
I trust Thee while my days go on.

I praise Thee while my days go on ;  
I love Thee while my days go on :  
Through dark and dearth, through fire and frost,  
With emptied arms and treasure lost,  
I thank Thee while my days go on.

E. B. BROWNING, *from 'De Profundis.'*

### Alone, yet Not Alone.

PAIN and suffering grow holy when we think how through them the Father comes to His children. Let us not be cheated by mere theories to say that sorrow is not dreadful. Let us not stand here in perfect health with our unbroken friendships and dare to say that sickness is not wearisome, and bereavement is not sad. We only mock the sufferers all round us when we say that. But let us claim that if a man really is close to God there is a victory over the pain, and a transfiguration of the sadness. 'If a man is close to God.' Can we say that and not remember how the Godhead and the manhood met in the Incarnation? Can we say that and not remember that all we have been saying was supremely realised when the Son of God was born and lived and died for us? God's being! Who could doubt it, as He walked the streets, and men saw God in His face? He brought it with Him



across the threshold of the temple, and through the low doorway of the cottage of Bethany. God's pity ! Who did not see it as He laid His hands upon the children's heads and looked down from the Mount of Olives on Jerusalem ? God's truth ! Who must not hear it speaking as He talks with Nicodemus, or preaches from the mountain ? God's power ! What more has it any need of proof, when the finger laid upon the hem of His garment gives the lost health back again, when the death upon the Cross is the salvation of the world ? All that is consolatory in God—being, sympathy, truth, power—Christ has set in the clearness and the splendour of His life.

And so if you want consolation you must come to Him. It is not a dead phrase. It was not dead when He spoke it first in Jerusalem, and said, 'Come to me.' It was the very word of life. You must come to Him, know Him, love Him, serve Him. In His Church and His service you must take your place. Nay let us not say 'must.' Our duties are always best stated as our privileges. You may come to Him, for He has said, 'Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' May we all come nearer and nearer to Him always, and find peace.

PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Sermons*.

I leave thee never ; thou art not alone,  
And with thine own and thee Mine angels dwell ;  
Possess thy soul in patience ; freely give  
Me love for love, and all shall yet be well.

The time is short. They that now weep ere long  
Shall be as though they wept not ; they that mourn  
Be comforted, for I will comfort them ;  
And sweet shall be their glad thanksgiving song.

*Lyra Mystica.*

### Prayer.

O Almighty God, Judge of the quick and the dead, so fit and prepare us, we beseech Thee, by Thy Grace, for that last account which we must one day give, that when the time of our appointed change shall come, we may look up to Thee

with joy and comfort, and may at last be received together with *him* whom Thou hast now taken from us, and with all that are near and dear to us, into that place of rest and peace where Thou shalt Thyself wipe away all tears from all faces, and where all our troubles and sorrows shall have an end. Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest One God, world without end. Amen.

*From 'The Treasury of Devotion.'*

### An Early Death.

*Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest. . . . He pleased God, and was beloved of Him; so that living among sinners he was translated. . . . He being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hastened He to take him away from among the wicked. . . . His grace and mercy is with His saints, and He hath respect unto His chosen.—*  
Wisdom, iv. 7, 10, 13-15.

IT matters not at what hour of the day  
The righteous fall asleep; death cannot come  
To him untimely who is fit to die;  
The less of this cold world, the more of Heaven—  
The briefer life, the earlier immortality. MILMAN.

Who has not known instances of the sudden dropping into the grave of some gifted intellect, some character of more than common loveliness and promise? The mourners, as they go about the streets, speak of what might have been if a few more years had been granted. Has, then, the soul been summoned home too soon? Has the Holder of the keys of death been hasty in unlocking the iron door? Nay, may it not be said, even by us who see so short a way into the future, that, like S. Stephen the Hebrew hero, such have been mightier in their death than their life? The short span has been stamped by the early death with its power of influence, of persuasiveness; yes, death has sometimes first opened our eyes to the saintliness of the departed one.

BISHOP WOODFORD, *Sermons*.

Christ has the key of death. Our times are in His hands. *He* measures out to us the handbreadth of our life, longer or shorter as it may be. We do not die at random. The thread of our days is not cut short by the shears of a malignant fate—is not snapped as by chance, or by the blind walk of mortal accident. There is no chance, no haphazard here; but we live so long as Christ wills, and we die exactly when Christ wills. Life and death are His, and, if we are His, then what is His is also ours, and life and death are ours also. Oh, comfortable thought for those that are Christ's. It is appointed unto them, as unto all, once to die, but they die at the right time. They are taken from the evil to come; or when they are at their best, or when God has no more work for them here to do; or when they may glorify Him more by their deaths than by their lives. How often God's saints and servants seem to us to die at the wrong moment: too early, when they were greatly needed, for not half, not a tithe, of their work was done; or too late, when they seem to have overlived themselves, and nothing but the dull, dead ashes of what once they were to survive; or in some other way to have missed the fittest opportunity. So, to us, in our short-sighted vision, it may appear, but it never is really so. As grace had the ordering of all the rest of their lives, so of this its most serious concluding act. Christ has the key of death—He, that is, Who is at once the highest Wisdom, the highest Power, and the highest Love; He will not then turn that key till the fittest moment has come.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, *Westminster Sermons*.

Mourn not for him ! but let your souls rejoice.  
 We know not what we shall be, but are sure  
 The spark once kindled by the eternal breath  
 Goes not out quite, but somewhere doth endure  
 In that strange life we blindly christen death.  
 Somewhere he is, though where we cannot tell;  
 But wheresoe'er God hides him, it is well.

LEWIS MORRIS, *Songs of Two Worlds*.

\*.\* For chapter on ' Little Children ' see p. 372.

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Burial of the Dead.

*I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died, and that He was buried, and that He rose again.—1 Cor.*

xv. 3, 4.

THE memory of the Burial of Jesus is stamped upon the heart of Christendom. The thought of this mystery appeals to some of the tenderest and most awe-stricken yearnings of the human heart. The account of the fact in the Gospel narrative is so concise, and yet so full of solemn dignity, that it takes rank among those passages where the Spirit of God sketches in one or two bold touches the outlines of the mystery, leaving the human spirit to fill in the details of the picture ; and then, too, it stands in direct relation to that strange borderland, at the memory of whose twilight indistinctness, voices are hushed, and dreams of ambition die—the borderland of the Grave.

Into the prevailing energy of the ‘blessed burying’ of the Lord, as felt in the mystery of relationship between God and man, we may scarcely penetrate. But it is possible (is it not ?) to see, as we stand by the grave in the garden, something of the power this submission of Jesus has exercised on the life and thought of Christendom. . . .

The Burial of Jesus was full of sadness : it was a striking funeral. The struggle was at an end. The powers of darkness had done their worst upon the Son of Man. Centuries of concentrated anguish had rolled on in each beat of time through the hours of the Passion. But it was all over now, and those who in life had feared to confess Him, in death had abandoned fear. The great shock of separation had done its work, as it



often has since done it, all too late, awakening the soul to perception of lost opportunities and rousing the great strong love of the human heart to stand undaunted face to face with danger, by the inspiring yet maddening presence of one loved and dead. . . .

They laid Him to His rest. The city sounds upon the winds of night swept over that strange grave; the noise and confusion of life might be near it, but here there was peace. It was a solemn funeral, but it was a 'blessed burying.' It was *one* of the fruitful mysteries in the experience of the Incarnate; it had, it has, its teaching and its power. It is for this reason that among the sacred facts directly revealed to the great Apostle *this* has its place. 'I have delivered unto you that which I also received,' says St. Paul, gazing into the gloom of death, and over it to glory—'that Christ was buried.' . . .

Death, so the Christian knows for certain, is an act of solemn separation. The undying spirit has quitted for some new method of existence its mortal home. Let it stay within that earthly dwelling-place, breathe in the breath, speak with the lips, act in the nervous hands, flash from the living eyes: *then* the mortal frame borrows from the immortal spirit its gift of immortality. But death has come, the cruel king has wrenched asunder those fast-united friends. Death has come and tossed aside the frail form to decay. The thought is unbearable. 'Is this the end, is this the end?' In view of such a possibility nothing more saddening than the burying-place of the creature; but since that Good Friday funeral, Christ's burial has sanctified the grave.

Henceforth the grave to the Christian is a witness to the meaning and limit of the great separation.

Certainly to us who are left behind, and in fresh remembrance of the dead we love, the separation is sufficiently awful. It is something, it is *everything*, to read in the act of the Representative Man what must be meant. The souls of the dead are robed in mystery: sometimes oh! how dim, how distant, how blended with mists, how shrouded in cloudy circumstances of dreams! But this at least is clear: there is

some special force in the separation for the ennobling of the body, some peculiar power for developing the energy of the soul.

In view of those who are dear to us, we shrink from the thought of *change*. But the change of the grave will be like the transfigured reality of Jesus in the tomb : what is weak or saddening gone ; what has moved the love of our hearts, even in this world, abundantly there. Awful in Jesus, awful in ourselves, is this great separation ; but blessed that it means a power of enlarging life and increasing beauty. It is *this* truth, this in our Master, in ourselves, that gives an awfulness and yet a comfort to the mystery of the grave. . . .

There is an infinity about pure human affection which points to another life. Here we have time enough given us just to have great hopes and strong loves, and then, what seemed so stable has vanished like a morning dream. They vanish, they do not end. Our Blessed Master by the very nobleness of His teachings taught immortality, for no merely earthly life is long enough to act out the principles of Christ. God has given us too strong a social instinct, and too keen a power of loving, for us *not* to be immortal. Your friends who are gone were loved by you *themselves*, not a part, but all ; it is that indivisible personality, body and soul, that you desire to meet again, with only *such* change as fits for immortality ; weakness, defect, infirmity gone ; and the soul, once sorrow-laden, now free from its burden of trouble, and ‘ the body of humiliation ’ developed by grace into its intended loveliness, changed by Divine working, and ‘ fashioned like unto the body of His glory.’

‘ Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.’

As certainly as sleep implies awaking, so—since Jesus was buried and rose again—the grave means resurrection from the dead, means, in fact, that here we work and there we wait, wait for the great awakening.

Life is full of blessing, but full of sorrow. Love is glorious, but partings are powers of crushing pain. Life is weighted

with severe thoughts—'labour,' 'struggle,' 'battle,' 'disappointment,' 'defeat.' Severe? They become bracing and blessed when the eye is fixed on Him, 'Who liveth and was dead,'<sup>1</sup> for so they can be borne in the strength of other memories as real and more lasting than they. *These* are voices from another world; *these* are whispers from a better land; *these* are consolations when we think of others, invigorating thoughts for ourselves. 'Sleep' after weariness, 'rest' after labour, 'peace' after storm and struggle, above all, to be 'with Christ' the Ideal, the sympathising Sufferer, the Saviour, the Friend; these truths soften and illuminate the solemnity, the Mystery of the grave.

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *The Mystery of the Passion.*

### Collect.

Grant, O Lord, that, as we are baptised into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for His merits, Who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Easter Eve.*

'The Resurrection and the Life

Am I: believe and die no more'—

Unchanged that voice—and though not yet

The dead sit up and speak,

Answering its call; we gladlier rest

Our darlings on earth's quiet breast,

And our hearts feel they must not break.

Far better they should sleep awhile

Within the Church's shade,

Nor wake, until new heaven, new earth,

Meet for their new immortal birth,

For their abiding-place be made,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 18.

Than wander back to life, and lean  
 On our frail love once more.  
 'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose  
 Friends out of sight, in faith to muse  
 How grows in Paradise our store.

Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,  
 Through prayer unto the tomb,  
 Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,  
 Gathering from every loss and grief  
 Hope of new spring and endless home.

Then cheerly to your work again  
 With hearts new-brac'd and set  
 To run, untir'd, love's blessèd race,  
 As meet for those who, face to face,  
 Over the grave their Lord have met.

*The Christian Year.*

### Hope in the Grave.

*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another.—Job xix. 25-7.*

*I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death.—Hosea xiii. 14.*

WE have left in the ground what once received our utmost regard ; no human footsteps linger around its resting-place, yet is the Eye of the Lord God upon that which we have hidden from our own eyes. The angelic watchers are in charge of that which is beyond our care. Yet a little while, and His providence will rebuild out of the old material—how we know not—the body of the resurrection. The future tenement of the soul is in that which on its departure was laid into the ground.

BISHOP WOODFORD, *Sermons on Subjects from the New Testament.*



Hope is the saint's covering, wherein he wraps himself when he lays his body down to sleep in the grave.

W. GURNELL.

I belong not to the old Adam, but to the new Adam—the new Head of men, who is the Lord from heaven, the Author of eternal life to all who obey Him. . . . I know that as I have borne the image of the earthly, so shall I bear the image of the heavenly,<sup>1</sup> if only the Spirit of Christ, the new Adam, be in me. For if Christ be in us, 'the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.' And if the Spirit of Him which raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us. How He will do it I know not; neither do I care to know. When He will do it I know not; but it will be when it ought to be; and that is enough for me. That He can do it I know, for He is the Maker of the universe, and to Him all power is given in heaven and earth; and as for its being strange, wonderful, past understanding, that matters little to me. That will be but one wonder more in a world where all is wonderful, one more mystery in an utterly mysterious universe.

CHARLES KINGSLEY, *All Saints' Day and other Sermons*.

*He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him.*—St. Luke xx. 38.

To the soul standing with all its questionings before the door of the tomb, He who liveth and was dead comes as He came to Martha, saying 'Thy brother shall rise again.' If we believe in Him, we do believe those words, and death is really changed to us, and the dead are really living by the assurance of the living Christ. It is a beautiful connection, one whose mysterious beauty we are always learning more and more, that the deeper our spiritual experience of Christ becomes, the more our soul's life really hangs on His life as its Saviour and

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 49.

continual Friend, the more real becomes to us the unquenched life of those who have gone from us to be with Him. In those moments when Christ is most real to me, when He lives in the centre of my desires and I am resting heavily upon His help, in those moments I am surest that the dead are not lost, that those whom He in Whom I trust has taken He is keeping. The more He lives to me the more they live.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

### Prayer.

Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with Whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity ; we give Thee thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver our *brother* out of the miseries of this sinful world ; beseeching Thee, that it may please Thee, of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect and to hasten Thy Kingdom ; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of Thy Holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Burial Service.*

It was not *him* they left  
 In the grave's cloister sealed :  
 That was his shadow, *he* had soared away—  
 Where welcomes pealed.

He is at rest with Thee ;  
 And though no tidings come  
 From out that region very far away,  
 It is our Home.

Yes, yes, he is with Thee—  
 But Thou art with me too ;  
 Then must the distances that 'twixt us lie  
 Be very few.

C. M. NOEL.

## CHAPTER V.

### Life through Death.

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life.—St. John v. 24.*

*If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death.—St. John viii. 52.*

*He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.—St. John xi. 25, 26.*

Do such words as these mean only that we shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day? Surely not ; our Lord spoke them in answer to that very notion.

‘Martha said to Him, I know that my brother shall rise again, in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, *I am* the Resurrection and the Life’ ; and then showed what He meant, by bringing back Lazarus to life, unchanged, and as he had been before he died.

Surely if that miracle meant anything, if these words meant anything, it meant this : that those who die in the fear of God and in the faith of Christ do not really taste death ; that to them there is no death, but only a change of place, a change of state ; that they pass, at once and instantly, into some new life, with all their powers, all their feelings, unchanged—purified doubtless from earthly stains, but still the same living, thinking, active beings which they were here on earth. I say active, the Bible says nothing about their sleeping till the Day of Judgment, as some have fancied. Rest they may, rest they will, if they need rest. But what is the true rest? Not idleness, but peace of mind. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from

fear, from doubt, from care,—this is the true rest. Above all, to rest from the worst weariness of all—knowing one's duty, and yet not being able to do it. That is true rest ; the rest of God, Who works for ever, and yet is at rest for ever ; as the stars over our heads move for ever, thousands of miles each day, and yet are at perfect rest, because they move orderly, harmoniously, fulfilling the law which God has given them. Perfect rest, in perfect work ; that surely is the rest of blessed spirits, till the final consummation of all things, when Christ shall have made up the number of His elect. I hope that this is so, I trust that this is so. I think our Lord's great words can mean nothing less than this. And if it be so, what comfort for us who must die ! What comfort for us who have seen others die, if death be but a new birth into some higher life ; if all that it changes in us is our body—the mere shell and husk of us—such a change as comes over the snake when he casts his old skin, and comes out fresh and gay, or even the crawling caterpillar, which breaks its prison and spreads its wings to the sun as a fair butterfly ! Where is the sting of death, then, if death can sting and poison and corrupt nothing of us for which our friends have loved us ; nothing of us with which we could do service to man or God ? Where is the victory of the grave if, so far from the grave holding us down, it frees us from the very thing which holds us down—the mortal body ?

Death is not death, then, if it kills no part of us, save that which hindered us from perfect life. Death is not death, if it raises us in a moment from darkness into light, from weakness into strength, from sinfulness into holiness. Death is not death, if it brings us nearer to Christ, who is the Fount of Life, if it perfects our faith by sight and lets us behold Him in Whom we have believed. Death is not death, if it gives us to those whom we have loved and lost, for whom we have lived, for whom we long to live again. Death is not death, if it joins the child to the mother who is gone before. Death is not death, if it takes away from that mother for ever all a mother's anxieties, a mother's fears, and lets her see, in the gracious



countenance of her Saviour, a sure and certain pledge that those whom she has left behind are safe—safe with Christ, and in Christ, through all the chances and dangers of this mortal life. Death is not death, if it rids us of doubt and fear, of chance and change, of space and time, and all which space and time bring forth, and then destroy. Death is not death : for Christ has conquered death, for Himself and for those who trust in Him. And to those who say, ‘ You were born in time, and in time you must die, as all other creatures do. Time is your king and lord, as he has been of all the old worlds before this, and of all the races of beasts whose bones and shells lie fossil in the rocks of a thousand generations ’ ; then we can answer them, in the words of the wise man, and in the name of Christ who conquered death :—

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race ;  
 Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,  
 Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace ;  
 And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,  
 Which is no more than what is false and vain,  
 And merely mortal dross ;  
 So little is our loss,  
 So little is thy gain !  
 For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,  
 And last of all thy greedy self consumed,  
 Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss  
 With an individual kiss ;  
 And joy shall overtake us as a flood :  
 When everything that is sincerely good  
 And perfectly divine,  
 With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine  
 About the supreme Throne  
 Of Him, t' Whose happy-making sight alone,  
 When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,  
 Then, all this earthly grossness quit,  
 Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,  
 Triumphant over death, and chance, and thee, O Time !<sup>1</sup>

CHARLES KINGSLEY, *The Victory of Life*.

<sup>1</sup> Milton's *Ode to Time*.

## A Passing Over.

*Seek Him that turneth the shadow of death into the morning.—*  
Amos v. 8.

Sorrow is for a season ; but joy, lasting,  
Death is a translation into life.

S. CHRYSOSTOM.

THE Apostle Paul rebukes, reproaches, censures those who sorrow at the departure of their friends. 'We would not,' says he, 'have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.'<sup>1</sup> It is those that have no hope whom he speaks of as sorrowing at the departure of their friends. But we, who live in hope, and believe in God, and are confident that Christ suffered for us and rose again, we who abide in Christ, and rise again through Him and in Him ; why do we either ourselves recoil from departing out of this life, or lament and grieve over our friends' departure, as if they were perished ; whereas Christ Himself, our Lord and God, admonishes us by His words, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'<sup>2</sup> If we do believe in Christ, let us put faith in His words and promises ; and as we are not to die eternally, let us pass in joyful confidence to Christ, with Whom we are both to live and reign for ever. In that we now die, we pass by death into immortality, nor can eternal life follow, unless it has been our portion to depart out of this world.

This is not a passing away, but a passing over, and a transit to things eternal after this temporal journey has run its course. Who would not hasten to what is better ? Who would not long to be changed, and made new after Christ's likeness, and come sooner to the dignity of heavenly glory ? For so Paul the Apostle proclaims when he says, 'Our

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xi. 25.

conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change the body of our humility into a conformity to the body of His glory.' <sup>1</sup> That such we shall be Christ our Lord also promises when He thus prays the Father for us, that we may be with Him, and may live with Him in the eternal habitations, and be joyful in the realms of heaven : ' Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, and may behold the glory which Thou gavest Me before the world began.' <sup>2</sup>

S. CYPRIAN, from '*Faith and Life*,' W. Bright.

In the light which streams from the Person and Life of Christ we may see with the eye of faith, that death need not mean the loss, but only the transformation of energy : that what seems outwardly to be an abrupt ending of the activities of the soul, as well as of the body, may well be rather the transference of those activities to another sphere of being in the unseen world, to which, if they have come under the wonder-working power of Christ's Life, they have already in their inner reality belonged ; so that what in itself, in so far as it belongs to this lower world, is transient and failing and dying away, is but preparing for and leading up to that which is permanent and undying in the world to come.

First that which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual,<sup>3</sup> and the one leading up to the other ; but only through suffering, through apparent failure, through death. ' That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.' And the suffering, the failure, the death, are not merely things to be passed through in order to attain to perfection, but instruments and means towards it. ' Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, *worketh for us* a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' <sup>4</sup> St. Paul does not say that it is something to be got over, some obstacle to be overcome before we attain to the glory ; but that it works for us the glory—it is the very means of attaining it. All the changes, and trials, and dis-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Phil. iii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 46.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xvii. 24.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 17.

appointments, and sufferings of this time are the means of perfection, if only we use them rightly according to God's Will, as His children in Christ, partakers of Christ's Life, guided by His Spirit.

J. W. HICKS.

Our present existence is the least and meanest portion of our inheritance ; death to the undying spirit is only the birthday of immortal life.

ARCHER BUTLER.

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesu Christ, Who by Thy death didst take away the sting of death ; grant unto us Thy servants so to follow in faith where Thou hast led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in Thee, and awaking up after Thy likeness, may be satisfied with it. Through Thy mercy, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. Amen.

*From the ' Priest's Prayer Book.'*



## CHAPTER VI.

### The Resurrection and the Life.

*As for me, I will behold Thy presence in righteousness, and when I wake up after Thy likeness I shall be satisfied with it.*—Psalm xvii. 15.

*Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

*But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming.*—1 Cor. xv. 20-3.

*That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.*—Phil. iii. 10.

*I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.*—St. John xi. 25, 26, R.V.

IN these words Christ turns the thoughts of His hearers from all else upon Himself.

He revealed to Martha that death, even in its apparent triumph, wins no true victory; that life is something inexpressibly vast and mysterious, centred in One Who neither knows nor can know any change; that beyond the earth-born clouds, which mar and hide it, there is an infinite glory of heaven in which men are made partakers. This revelation Christ makes with absolute knowledge of all human needs.

He alone could feel to the uttermost the intensity of the grief which He came to stay: He alone could discern the spring of all sorrow in the sin which He came to mar: He alone could foresee that the immediate issue of His work of sovereign power would be His own death upon the cross; and yet, looking full upon the desolation which seemed to plead against the truth of the words, full upon the infirmity and guilt

of men which seemed to make their application impossible, full upon the agony and passion which seemed to disprove them, He said, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life': not 'I shall be,' but *I am*, even in the crisis of bereavement, even in the prospect of the Cross; not *the Resurrection* only, but *the Life*, that permanent and eternal power of which it is one result, but only one result—that men shall rise again. . . .

Thus there are two main thoughts in this revelation of Christ. It teaches us that the Resurrection and the Life in which we believe are realities which are not future only but present: it teaches us also that both lie in our union with a Person. Our faith, in the last trial to which it must be subjected, reaches out beyond the scene, and aspires to a fulness of being which transcends all experience.

*I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.* Christ, in a word, is the Resurrection of the dead; Christ is the life of the living; He is the Resurrection because he is the Life. Death is the dream, the shadow; and not life, as we hastily judge, who measure being by our senses.

This, then, is the first point. Life, eternal life, and, therefore, the Resurrection as included in it, is brought to men by Christ now. Christ shows by His word, and by the speaking fact of the recall of Lazarus to earthly life, that what we see is but a small part of what we are; that physical death touches only the circumstances of our present existence; that dissolution is the condition of a new form of life, but not an interruption, still less the close of life.

By every detail of this history we are encouraged to look below the surface of things, to realise how life, true life, triumphs over death even through death; to regard the restoration of Lazarus not as a mere marvel only but as a type of the constant action of God, Who preserves through every vicissitude all that which makes us what we are; to know by that staying of the power of corruption, by that call to renewed activity, that Christ, as He is the Food to support us, the

Light to guide us, is also the Life—infinite and eternal—by which we live.

So we come to the second chief thought suggested by the words : '*I am the Resurrection and the Life.*' The Resurrection and the Life is not simply through Christ but in Christ. *I am*, He said—and not I promise, or I bring, or I accomplish—*I am the Resurrection and the Life.* And when we fix our attention upon the words from this point of sight, we see at once that they include deeper mysteries than we can at present fathom ; that they open out glimpses of some more sublime form of being than we can at present apprehend, that they gather up in one final utterance to the world what had been said before darkly and partially of the union of the believer with his Lord and of the consequences which proceed from it. . . .

*I am the Resurrection and the Life.* The words carry us back to what St. John said of the Word in the opening verses of the Gospel : *That which hath been made was life in Him.* It is no doubt very hard for us to think of this Divine life underlying all that we see around us in endless change and motion, imperfect, inconstant, conflicting ; and still the life is there, and that life is Christ. Man is in a true sense, according to the expressive language of old thinkers, a Microcosm, a miniature universe, and he cannot with impunity dissociate himself from the great universe of which he is the representative and the crown. The thought is one which belongs to the very essence of our faith, and we are taught by the Lord's words to cherish it. We cannot with our present faculties pursue it far ; but is it not a joy to feel that this vast life, this life of the whole world, carries with it the assurance of a resurrection, of a *restoration of all things*, for which creation *travaileth until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

We commonly lose much, I believe, by neglecting this widest relationship of man with the world which the Scriptures, anticipating the latest physical theories, affirm on its divine side. We lose even more by neglecting the relationship of man with man. However much we may strive to keep ourselves alone, to narrow our wants, to strengthen our self-

reliance, we are driven by the least reflection to acknowledge that we are bound one to another, that we are bound to the past, that we are brethren united by an indissoluble kinsmanship, children with an ineffaceable heritage, that our separate lives are but fragments of some larger life, and that life again is Christ's. He quickens us not as individual units, but as parts of Himself. He raises us up not to stand alone, but as members of His glorified Body. He trains us while we are still kept apart from one another by the conditions of mortality to reach forward to this loftier fellowship. He communicates to us His flesh, His humanity, in which is the fulness of union ; He warns us that selfishness, isolation, is death.

This being so, we come to understand, so far as man can understand such teaching, what St. Paul means when he speaks of the Christian as *being in Christ, living in Christ, speaking in Christ, sanctified in Christ* ; when he transfers to the individual believer all the acts of Christ ; when he argues that he himself died with Christ and was raised again with Christ ; when he pleads that we are *one body in Christ*. For all this is but a writing out at length of the Lord's own words, *I am the Resurrection and the Life*.

Whatever life man has, it is in fellowship with Christ, wherein there is already made a beginning of that supreme life of which the life of the family, of the nation, of the Church, of the race, are so many types and foreshadowings. But while we look forward to the completed revelation of this larger life in which we shall each in due proportion consciously contribute to the fulness of a being of which we are made partakers, we know at the same time that nothing will be lost which belongs to the perfection of our present being. When Christ told His disciples of the death of Lazarus, He added to the name the one title which expressed all that Lazarus had been, all that he still was, to them : *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*. When He brought relief to Martha, He repeated the word in which she had summed up the extent of her bereavement : *Thy brother shall rise again*. How it is that the fruits of affection and kinsmanship can be taken up into and harmonised



with a new form of existence we cannot tell. It is vain for us, nay far worse than vain, to seek to transfer directly to another order the limitations, the modes of action and dependence, which belong to this, in which we now are. It is enough for us that, as Christ's words assure us, human ties have a living permanence in Him; that they survive the transitory sphere in which they have here found their growth; that they await a resurrection in which they shall be seen in their true glory. And therefore it is that when we bear to their last resting-place those whom we have loved, these words first greet us at the churchyard-gate with the certain promise that our love is not lost; therefore it is that we can humbly trust that, when they shall be addressed hereafter to friends who shall carry us forth, we ourselves may at last know the consolation which they offer to those whom we have left. . . .

If we believe in a living Christ, the Son of God, that faith contains treasures of wisdom which later experience will teach us to make our own. The years as they pass may leave us a sad inheritance of weakness and death; but in due time Christ will reveal Himself to us, even here, in this chequered scene of loss and conflict, as the Resurrection and the Life, the Life whereby He quickens us for new labour, the Resurrection whereby He gives back to us the past transfigured for nobler uses.

BISHOP WESTCOTT, *The Revelation of the Father.*

No Angel comes to us to tell  
 Glad news of our beloved dead;  
 Nor at the old familiar board  
 They sit among us breaking bread.  
 Three days we wait before the tomb,  
 Nay lifelong years; and yet no more,  
 For all our passionate tears, we find  
 The stone rolled backward from the door.  
 Yet are they risen as He is risen;  
 For no eternal loss we grieve;  
 Blessed are they who ask no sign,  
 And, never having seen, believe.

LEWIS MORRIS, *Songs of Two Worlds.*

*Collect.*

The time has come that we have longed for ; what greater or better work can be found than to proclaim the might of our Risen Lord ? Bursting open the doors of the grave, He has displayed to us the glorious banner of His Resurrection. Through Him the sons of light are born to life eternal ; the courts of the Kingdom of Heaven are opened to believers, and by the law of a blessed intercourse earthly and heavenly things are interchanged. For by the Cross of Christ we have all been redeemed from death, and by His Resurrection the Life of us all has risen again. While He has assumed our mortal nature, we acknowledge Him as the God of Majesty ; and in the glory of the Godhead we confess Him God and Man ; Who by dying destroyed our death, and by rising again restored our life, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

W. BRIGHT, *Ancient Collects : Gelasian, Easter prefaces.*

Wherever Christians lay their dead  
Christ's sepulchre they build ;  
Death is to them interpreted,  
And hope not unfulfilled.

The highest, brightest hopes alone  
Have reason on their side ;  
'Tis death itself that dies, o'erthrown  
By Jesus crucified.

He tasted it ; its impotence  
To harm Him was made plain ;  
So ended was the long suspense,  
The fear of death was slain.

Beyond the tomb mine eyes have gazed,  
And from the other side  
I heard a voice (may God be praised !)  
A voice that testified :—

'The Conqueror, His promise kept,  
Has put an end to strife ;  
The one you loved, the one you wept,  
Has faded into life.

'The face has vanished ; not the grace  
That made the face a shrine,  
Where loyal love was wont to trace  
A signature divine.

'The presence seems a thing withdrawn ;  
In truth it is not so ;  
More tender than the opening dawn  
Is evening's afterglow.'

We turn to gain all seeming loss  
If but His rod be kissed,  
Who in the shadow of the Cross  
Ordained the Eucharist.

Whenever Christians mourn their dead  
They stand Christ's tomb beside,  
There see they death interpreted,  
Transfigured, glorified !

A. GURNEY.

### The Likeness of His Resurrection.

*If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection.*—Rom. vi. 5.

AT Easter-tide one thought must ever be present to our mind—the remembrance of those who 'sleep in Jesus.' We think with gladness of Christ's Resurrection power, strong to save us from the misery of sin ; but we never can forget at Easter the other victory of the Lord—the victory over death.

Now no more can death appal,  
Now no more the grave enthral :  
Thou hast conquered paradise,  
And in Thee Thy saints shall rise.

‘Christ the first fruits ; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.’

How could we bear this ugly wrench of death, how could we ever smile or play, or love again, ‘if in this life only we had hope’? Most of us have some sacred spot where lie the relics of our dearest treasure. To-day we go to the quiet resting-place of our sacred dead, and as we look at the spring flowers preaching to us so sweetly of the great renewal, we whisper softly, ‘In the likeness of His Resurrection.’ One by one they will be given back to us, ‘conformed to the body of His glory.’ Here they were ‘in the likeness of His death,’ girt around with all the frailty and sore distress which comes alike to all, sharply pressed by anxious toil and bitter pains: ‘My flesh and my heart faileth,’ often enough they cried. But soon they will awake and sing, brilliant they will come forth in the unapproachable and unknowable splendour of the risen Christ, understanding ‘all mysteries and all knowledge,’ fulfilled with the abundant sweetness of the love of God. The same familiar form, the same gentle, playful smile, the same tender heart, only perfect with all the majesty of the risen life. ‘Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’

T. B. DOVER, *Alive unto God.*

The graves grow thicker, and life’s ways more bare  
As years on years go by ;  
Nay ! Thou hast more green gardens in Thy care,  
And more stars in Thy sky !

Behind, hopes turned to griefs, and joys to memories,  
Are fading out of sight :  
Before, pains changed to peace, and dreams to  
certainties,  
Are glowing in God’s Light.



Hither come backslidings, defeats, distresses,  
 Vexing this mortal strife ;  
 Thither go progress, victories, successes,  
 Crowning immortal Life.

No jubilees, few gladsome festive hours,  
 Form landmarks for my way ;  
 But Heaven and earth, and Saints, and friends, and  
 flowers  
 Are keeping Easter-Day !

*Lyra Mystica.*

### Collect.

O merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Resurrection and the Life : in Whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Him, shall not die eternally ; Who also hath taught, by His holy apostle St. Paul, not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them that sleep in Him ; we meekly beseech Thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness ; that when we shall depart this life, we may rest in Him, as our hope is our brethren do ; and that, at the general Resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in Thy sight ; and receive that blessing which Thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all that love and fear Thee, saying : Come, ye blessed children of My Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Grant this, we beseech Thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer—Burial Service.*

*Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's.—1 Cor. iii. 23.*

PART III.

LIFE BEYOND THE VEIL



## CHAPTER I.

### The Intermediate State.

#### 1. *Self-knowledge—the Past.*

*I remember the days of old ; I meditate on all Thy works ; I muse on the work of Thy hands.—Psalm cxliii. 5.*

*Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me : for Thou art the God of my salvation ; on Thee do I wait all the day.—Psalm xxv. 5.*

NEARLY all that Scripture appears to have revealed as to the state of the departed is included in the mysterious parable, or history, of the rich man and Lazarus.<sup>1</sup> We may add to it the mysterious words spoken by our Lord to the dying malefactor, as recorded by St. Luke,<sup>2</sup> and the still more mysterious reference in the third chapter of the First Epistle of St. Peter, to our Lord's preaching in Hades, and then, with the exception of a few mystical references in the Apocalypse, and a limited number of passing allusions elsewhere in Holy Scripture, we have all that it has pleased God should be revealed to us of what is appropriately and significantly called the Intermediate State.

Scripture appears to disclose to us that the departed soul is not slumbering, but in a state of vivid consciousness ; unclothed—but in a state of rest and passivity ; working no longer, but with all the works of the past, all the deeds done in the body, following in memory, and consciously present in all-inclusive retrospect. The man has passed from the first to the second of the three cosmical spheres in which he has been appointed to live ; behind him the sphere of the embodied and

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xvi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> xxiii. 43.



the material, before him the sphere of the re-embodied, yet at the same time spiritual and eternal. . . .

The great Christian thinker, whose general conception of the state of the departed has now been very widely accepted, would seem to be fully in harmony with the inferential teaching of the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, when he regards the state of the departed as, so to speak, a cloistral state, a state in which, to use his own impressive language, the soul withdraws itself 'into the innermost and mystical chambers of existence,'<sup>1</sup> lives a deep inward life, and beholds, reviews, and realises, in its very essence, all that made up and characterised the now ever-present past. Just as drowning men have sometimes solemnly asserted that, at the moment when death seemed imminent, every deed and every incident of the past has risen up in memory; so, it seems reasonable to think, it may be in the realm of the departed. All that made the earthly life what it was—all the hidden sins, all the open transgressions, all the selfishness, all the impurity, all the uncharitableness, all the latent unbelief, every unkind act, and every bitterly spoken word, and withal the sense of the irrevocable suffusing the whole, may well be conceived to form the element of the flame which bore anguish to the rich man; and which, in widely differing measures and degrees, will be present in every soul in the realm of the departed. Even to those who have decided for Christ, and have been justified by His blood, retrospect will bear many a sharp and salutary sorrow, that will melt away in the hope and joy that the nearer presence of the Lord will bear to them who are in Abraham's bosom.

From all this it has been inferred that the realm of the dead may be regarded as a realm of judgment, which the soul, thus laid bare, will, as it were, pass upon itself—a prelude and anticipatory judgment. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in words often mistranslated, and so often misunderstood, most significantly declares, it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this—judgment.'<sup>2</sup>

BISHOP ELLICOTT, *Visitation Charge*, 1889.

<sup>1</sup> Martensen.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ix. 27.

The transition of death is no mere change from the unconsciousness of physical weakness to the joyous consciousness of Divine glory. The soul has to pass through a judgment, whether it die in grace or no. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,'<sup>1</sup> although at death we do commend our spirits to the keeping of a most loving God in Christ.

Great is the fear of the soul coming into the presence of God, though great be the praise wherewith the accepted soul worships God. When St. John saw our Lord standing in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, he 'fell at His feet as dead.'<sup>2</sup> How much more will the soul experience the awfulness of the manifestation when the veil of sense is entirely taken away!

Blessed fear, which shall pass away for ever as the soul is perfected in that love from whence this fear springs and to which it guides.

O Jesu, suffer me not to live in the darkness of the world, which heeds not Thine appearing; but as Thou hast come down upon the earth, bringing the words of eternal life, fill me with Thy holy fear, lest I forfeit that life: illuminate me with that Divine wisdom to which the fear of Thy holy Name should lead, and perfect me in that love which is the surest refuge of all them whom Thy fear hath sanctified.

R. M. BENSON, *Spiritual Readings*.

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, we beseech Thee by the anguish of Thy Soul when Thou didst hang upon the Cross, to have mercy upon all those who are at this moment near to death, and as Thou didst commend Thy Spirit into the Hands of Thy Heavenly Father, grant that they whom Thou hast vouchsafed to make members of Thy mystical Body, may be made partakers of the reconciliation which Thou hast effected, that their souls may enter into the rest which Thou hast obtained, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. Amen.

*Intercessory Manual.*

<sup>1</sup> Heb. x. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. i. 17.

The moment will come when our soul will leave the body. There are two moments before us, in the first of which we shall be still in this world, in the second of which we shall have passed out of the world. This we all know well.

. . . Let us try and think what the effect upon us of that one moment will be. Will it not seem like an age? How will all our past days and hours be crowded into that moment, as we live them over again in memory—no, not in memory, but in one clear vivid present! And then, bear in mind, that all outward things will be shut out from us. The sights and sounds of this world will have been left behind.

In our present state, a thousand things carry away our thoughts from ourselves. We are always forgetting ourselves in what others do or say. The mind wanders off to this thing or that, and finds relief in change. But in that moment the whole powers of the mind will be turned inwards, and bent upon itself.

There will be not a word, not a whisper, not a sound, not a motion to distract it from itself. It will be alone. And yet, again, in one sense it will not be alone. The soul will feel that it is before God. We shall feel that we are alone with God. We shall feel that we are under His gaze, His piercing, searching gaze, and that He is reading us through and through. He will see us, we shall feel that He sees us, and in some sense we shall see Him. We shall probably know what He is, as we have never known it before. We shall have such a notion as a creature may have of His pure spotless holiness, of His bright and glorious perfection. And, with this, what must come but a sense of the abomination of sin in His sight? We have heard that, 'He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity'; we shall know then what this means, when we are alone with Him, shut in from all created beings, face to face with His purity, in the moment when He has required our souls of us. What will our life look like to Him then? and what will it look like to us? . . . Perhaps the most overwhelming feeling will be, the remembrance of all that God has been to us, and all that He has done for us. Imagine this bursting upon us.



Imagine God revealing to us all the whole history of His acts of love towards us, so that we see at a glance every grace that He has ever given us, all His calls, and warnings, and invitations, His lessons, His drawing of our hearts to Him, His devices and plans to win us, His many thousand aids bestowed on us; and so our wakening up to all that we might have been, and to all that we are; our seeing clearly all His vast love, and all our ingenuity in thwarting His purposes. . . .

But have we any reason to suppose that what the soul feels and knows about itself will pass away and be forgotten? Surely all that we know about our own powers, and all that we know about the love of God, would lead us to believe that the memory of that meeting with God would live on in the soul and work most powerfully upon it for good. Probably we ourselves, even now, rarely or never forget altogether what has settled down in our minds. It is strange to see how a slight circumstance will bring before us things which have happened long years ago in all their most minute particularity, when we fancied that we had forgotten them. And when God calls, and warns, and teaches us, He does not mean that we should forget His revelation. It is part of our misery in this world that so many things for a while cover over and hide what He writes with His finger on the soul, as dust gathers over an inscription until it cannot be read. In the unseen world there will be nothing to turn away the mind from the thought of God and of itself. Surely, then, the vision of God will live on in us. The sight which we have of Him in that moment when we pass beyond all distraction of the world, to see nothing but Him, will be stamped upon our spirits. And the sight which we had of ourselves, in our own true, real character, as shown to us by God, with all our past sins, faults, failing, imperfections and corruption, will remain fixed there also.

But will not this be torture, and misery, and wretchedness to the soul? No; for it will not be alone in that state of the departed. Our Blessed Lord will be present there. He has taken possession of that realm. He has made it His own.



He blessed it with His visible presence when He descended into Hell. He claimed for His own soul, as man, the guardian care, the comforts, the support, the presence of God with the departed, when He said, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.' He assured the same protection and the same comforts of God, of which He tasted Himself, to us, who are the members of His body ; for all which He took for Himself as the Head He took that we might share it with Him. He has claimed as part of His Kingdom that abode of souls ; for when the penitent thief asked to be remembered by Him when He came into His Kingdom, He answered, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise'—this very day thou shalt know what it is to be with Me, to feel Me near thee, guiding, teaching, comforting, assuring thee that thou art Mine for ever. There is a mysterious passage which seems to tell us how He Himself bore revelations of His love and mercy to the spirits of those in that unseen world : 'The Gospel was preached to them that are dead.'<sup>1</sup> And so, doubtless, He reveals Himself to them still. The manner of His presence with the departed may not be the same as when His soul was amongst them, while His body lay in the grave ; but we need not doubt that He is there present still.

The manner of His presence with us on earth is different from what it was when He was seen by men in the flesh, but we know that He is with us, even to the end of the world. And so we cannot but believe that He is still present with the departed and puts forth His power and love to bless them. Nay, He seems Himself to claim this power over the place of departed spirits as part of the special fruits of His own victory over death when He says, 'I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hell and of Death.'<sup>2</sup>

Pause, and imagine what must be the effect of that presence of our Blessed Lord upon the departed spirits. As the sight of their past sins broods upon their minds, how may we believe

<sup>1</sup> St. Peter iv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. i. 18.

that He makes them hate and abhor their old pollution ! As the knowledge of the purity of God sinks down into their being, and its beauty and fairness grows upon them, how must He make that knowledge work in them, till they crave and long to be made more and more pure themselves ! As the memory of all God's wondrous love to them melts and entrances them more and more, how must our Lord give force to that memory and so quicken their longings to be brought nearer and nearer to the very presence of God unveiled in heaven ! We may well trust that in His conquering power our Lord will thus overrule all that might hurt the soul, and turn it into a gain. We may, perhaps, even venture to use His words by the prophet Hosea, as though they were spoken to the spirit before the full and final triumph of the resurrection hour has arrived : ' I will ransom thee from the power of the grave ; I will redeem thee from death. O death, I will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction.'<sup>1</sup>

Every hope of the soul as it passes from the body centres on our Blessed Lord. If, therefore, He is to be our hope and stay after death, He must be our hope and stay now. We must live in close, earnest, true communion with Him. We must live with Him as our Friend and Guide, our heart's inmost life. . . . Let it be often our prayer now, ' Lord Jesus receive my spirit,' make it Thine Own, work in it, bind it to Thyself, unite it, make it one with Thee. . . . As you live with Him, you will be able to die with Him. As all through life you will have found His love come out more as the trial was the greater, so in that tremendous trial, when you are on the borders of the unseen world, you will look for a greater love still. You will feel, He has been there in that world before me, He is there in power now ; He has the keys of hell and of death ; I am not going out of the borders of His kingdom ; nor where His love cannot bless ; no, but nearer to Him ; Lord Jesus receive my spirit. ' Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hosea xiii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xxiii. 4.

‘I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day.’<sup>1</sup>

R. W. RANDALL, *Life in the Catholic Church*.

Happy will be that hour, most desirable and blessed that time, when the Heavenly Spouse of the soul, meeting her as she leaves the prison of the body, shall salute her with this most precious welcome, ‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.’<sup>2</sup> ‘Come forth with joy, fear not, neither be afraid; thou quittest an exile, thou leavest the misery of a suffering world. Here shall be neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: the body shall no longer bear down the spirit. Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord.’

BISHOP FORBES.

### Prayer.

O God, Who givest and takest away according to Thine own good pleasure, grant unto us, we beseech Thee, such a measure of Thy grace that, mindful of Thy warnings, we may so live unto Thee in this life, that when Thou shalt call us to depart from the body we may be received by Thy holy Angel, cleansed from all our offences. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. Amen.

*From ‘The Priest’s Prayer-book.’*

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon ii. 10.

## CHAPTER II.

### The Intermediate State.

#### 2. *Anticipation—the Future.*

*Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.—2 Cor. v. 4.*

SCRIPTURE depicts this ‘unclothed condition of the soul’ as an imperfect condition, not desirable in itself as an end, but as a transitional state of being—a state of expectancy, rather than of fruition. . . .

It has been described by one great writer as ‘a school-time of contemplation, as this world is a discipline of service’;<sup>1</sup> and by another as ‘a kingdom of calm thought, of self-reflection, and remembrance.’<sup>2</sup> It is a solemn hush of being, in which it is the part of the mightiest spirits to lie still. . . .

The expression, ‘clothed upon,’ is remarkable. It denotes the receiving some further clothing in addition to that already possessed. St. Paul looks beyond the intermediate state of the disembodied soul to the moment when it shall, upon the resurrection of the body, enter again its old tabernacle. But even so, we do not reach the full meaning. To be simply repossessed of the former garment of flesh is not the whole idea. The ‘clothing upon’ is something more than this. It is the drawing over the ancient vestment something more excellent. The resurrection-body is represented as a mantle of glory put on over the present raiment of corruption, so that, as the less beautiful covering is lost in the more beautiful superinduced

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Newman.

<sup>2</sup> Martensen.



upon it, mortality may be, in that great hour of restitution, swallowed up in life. . . .

. . . 'Through the rest of the disembodied soul,' St. Paul looked on to the period of its renewal and redoubled power. Beyond the period of comparative inactivity, he passed to the thought of the greater life of service which lay behind, when nothing should be taken away from man as man now is, but something additional given to him ; when, with a soul not, on the one hand, clothed with a corruptible body, nor, on the other hand, stripped of that body which is its own instrument of power, but clothed upon with the radiant garment of a body transformed and spiritualised, he should serve with a grander service and worship with a loftier homage.

BISHOP WOODFORD, *Sermons, on the New Testament.*

The veil that hangs between us and that great unseen world, *Sheol*, or *Hades*, or *Paradise*, however Holy Scripture designates it, in whole or in part, has scarcely been lifted, even in the recorded words of the Lord Himself. What the rapt apostle saw or heard in Paradise he expressly tells us *it is not possible for man to utter*.<sup>1</sup> Only the broadest outlines are revealed to us. But these are revealed ; and so are fitting subjects for our earnest thought and meditation. The continued, uninterrupted, conscious existence of each human spirit, disembodied, but not therefore necessarily disassociated altogether from matter (as is perhaps, usually, but superficially, assumed to be the case), nor without some envelope or vehicle, however subtle, of its living essential vital forces, which gives it outer form and locality and individualisation ; sensibility, perhaps greatly intensified, to pain and pleasure, inward and outward, mental and physical ; continued memory, and power of utterance and converse ; recognition of others in the same mysterious abode, and consequent upon such power of converse and such recognition, the possibility, at least, of social life ; knowledge of what has passed on earth since their decease, by whatever means conveyed, direct, or through inter-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 4.

course with later comers; interest in those left behind; hope or fear, for them and for itself—these surely must be allowed by the believer in the Christian Scriptures to be general features, clearly enough revealed, of the condition of all departed souls in the great Unseen; which, we shall do well to remember, is not so much a 'future state' (except to each one of us who are still in the flesh), but is the actual present state of the vast mass of mankind. Further, if faith must insist that thus much must be conceded, it must also follow, from the continuance of essential life, with memory and power of converse, that there is also moral, mental, spiritual movement, growth, development, and this aided and quickened by a nearer perception of spiritual things, consequent upon the introduction of the soul to great hitherto unseen realities, simultaneously with its removal from this present life, and its being unclothed of that grosser frame of flesh and blood by which it was in relation with this visible world.

P. G. MEDD, *The One Mediator*.

Departed saints, though at rest, have not yet received their actual reward. 'Their works do follow with them,'<sup>1</sup> not yet given in to their Saviour and Judge. They are in an incomplete state in every way, and will be so till the Day of Judgment, which will introduce them to the joy of their Lord.

They are incomplete, inasmuch as their bodies are in the dust of the earth, and they wait for the resurrection.

They are incomplete, as being neither awake nor asleep; I mean, they are in a state of rest, not in the full employment of their powers. The angels are serving God actively; they are ministers between heaven and earth. And the saints, too, one day shall judge the world—they shall judge the fallen angels; but at present, till the end comes, they are at rest only, which is enough for their peace, enough for our comfort in thinking of them; still incomplete, compared with what one day shall be.

There is an incompleteness also as regards their place of rest. They are 'under the altar.'<sup>2</sup> Not in the full presence of

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vi. 9.

God, seeing His face, and rejoicing in His works, but in a safe and holy treasure-house close by—like Moses, ‘in a cleft of the rock’; covered by the hand of God, and beholding the skirts of His glory. So again, when Lazarus died, he was carried to Abraham’s bosom; which, however honoured and peaceful an abode, was a place short of heaven. This is elsewhere expressed by the use of the word ‘paradise,’ or the garden of Eden; which, again, though pure and peaceful, visited by angels and by God Himself, was not heaven. No emblem could express more vividly the refreshment and sweetness of that blessed rest, than to call it the garden in which the first man was placed;—to which must be added St. Paul’s account of it, that he heard in it (when he was caught up thither) ‘unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.’<sup>1</sup> Doubtless it is full of excellent visions and wonderful revelations. God there manifests Himself, not as on earth dimly, and by material instruments, but by those more intimate approaches which spirit admits of, and our present faculties cannot comprehend. And in some unknown way that place of rest has a communication with this world, so that disembodied souls know what is going on below. The martyrs cry out, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’<sup>2</sup> They saw what was going on in the Church, and needed comfort from the sight of the triumph of evil. And they obtained white robes and a message of peace. Still, whatever be their knowledge, whatever their happiness, they have but lost their tabernacle of corruption, and are ‘unclothed,’ and wait to be ‘clothed upon,’ having put off ‘mortality,’ but not yet being absorbed in ‘life.’

J. H. NEWMAN, *Parochial and Plain Sermons.*

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesu Christ, Who didst vouchsafe to be cut off from the land of the living, and to be stricken for the transgression of Thy people: and to make Thy grave with the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vi. 10.

wicked and with the rich in Thy death : grant that by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we, who have been baptised into Thy death, may also be buried with Thee ; and as the reward of a simple obedience in all things by Thy grace, may enter with Thee into Paradise, there to grow in rest and peace and likeness to Thee with all Thy Saints ; until the Day of that joyful resurrection shall come, when the souls and bodies of Thine elect shall be joined together again for ever ; and they shall be brought with Thee into the full and perfect and everlasting bliss of the Vision of Thine unveiled Godhead ; unto which do Thou vouchsafe to bring us all, with all those who from the beginning of the world have pleased Thee in their day and generation, and who are not to be made perfect without us. Amen.

C. G. B.



## CHAPTER III.

### Personality—Consciousness, Memory.

*The righteous live for evermore ; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High.*—Wisdom of Solomon v. 15.

*To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.*—St. Luke xxiii. 43.

THROUGH the ages these words do their glorious work. They are one of those mighty utterances wherewith Jesus has won men to His allegiance. His power lies in this—that He ministers not to artificial needs, but to the real needs of men from His Holy Cross. Thence, as Priest, He sets men free from the obligations of a hated past by His forgiveness ; thence, as Pastor-King, He meets their present needs by the ministrations of His grace ; thence, as Prophet, He delivers them from the fear of death by a good hope of eternal bliss. O, how priceless in the eyes of men is the word that gives this hope !

The fear of death has been ever one of the intensest fears in man ; it has robbed him of enjoyment in life, unnerved him in moments of crisis, and held him in the bondage of the most intense kind. On this dread, mainly, superstition has been based. Now, Jesus draws men to His feet because He can take this fear away. As a matter of historic fact, He has taught men to die, not with a cynical indifference, nor a stoical resignation, nor an emotional excitement, but in the calm, deep, settled peace of a blessed hope, for this hope must ever be the stay of those who hear Him say to them, ‘Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.’

Two things underlie man’s dread of what awaits him

beyond death—his ignorance of the future state and his sense of sin. Jesus meets both these needs. He meets our dread of the future as of an unknown state, by giving us a revelation of the state of the faithful departed, 'Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.' Hence we learn that the death of a penitent believer in Jesus Christ is a birth into a more glorious condition of life. Our death is like the death of Jesus Christ. As He in His death was quickened in spirit, and passed into a state of glorious power,<sup>1</sup> so our death is an entrance into the same life.

It is no cessation of being. How awful is the thought of going out into nothingness. 'Annihilation, sir,' a thoughtful man said to me once, 'Hell itself were preferable to that,' and so saying, I believe he gave expression to the deep instincts of man . . . Jesus delivers us from this awful dread of going out into nothingness, by teaching us in clearest terms that death is not a cessation of being, but a change of the circumstances of life. Personality lives on there, as here—I shall be myself; you shall be yourself, and no other. 'Thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' Here I am in the body; there I shall be out of the body; but I shall still be. Personality is indestructible. For weal or woe, I bear the burden of an endless life. For what is death? It is the passing away of the spirit from the body. 'Jesus bowed His head and gave up the ghost.' With this separation life leaves the body. The eye no longer sees; the tongue no longer speaks; the heart no longer beats. In us corruption soon begins its destroying work, and dissolves this wondrous organism into its original state of mere dust. But the spirit, where is it? where is he who saw through that eye and spake through that tongue? where is the master-mind and the master-will which once spake and acted through that decaying corpse? Our Lord tells us it lives on in a nobler state.

For a material body is not a necessary condition of man's life. He is not an animal, but a spirit dwelling for a while in an animal organism. Just as Jesus' personality is in His

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. Peter iii. 18.

Divine nature, so man's personality is in his spiritual nature. As Jesus is God tabernacling in human nature, so man is a spirit tabernacling in an animal nature. Now, death cannot lay its hand on the spirit and cause it to cease to be. It can exist under very varied conditions in a body smitten by sin, or in a glorified body, or out of the body; it can exist in earth, or in Paradise, or in Heaven, or in Hell. But one thing it cannot do—it cannot pass into non-being. And therefore I cannot cease to be; under some condition of being, I must live on for ever. 'The spirits of just men made perfect,' are living spirits in the land of rest. Thus, in the truest sense, those who go from us are 'not dead, but gone before.'

Death is no passing into a state of unconsciousness or inactivity. I know that in the Bible the dead are spoken of as 'them which are asleep.'<sup>1</sup> But this term is used where death is considered as it acts on the body. We are taught to believe, not only in the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body; and here death is but a sleep; the grave of a loved one is but a bed where angels keep their watch over the sleeping bodies of the faithful; and when the morning breaks, as at His second advent, the Sun of Righteousness arises on this world; the sleepers, aroused by His voice, shall awake and come forth. 'All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.'<sup>2</sup> Fittingly, therefore, is the term 'sleep' applied to the repose of the bodies of the faithful in the grave.

But they sleep not in their spirits. Does the spirit ever sleep, even here? Truly in Paradise they rest; but the rest of spirits is like the sabbath of God, a rest of restful activity. No oblivion enfolds them in an intense sleep, for in them consciousness lives on. 'Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.' This fact underlies all the New Testament revelations of the state of departed Christians. It is so with the parable of Dives and Lazarus; it is so with the vision of the souls beneath the altar; it is so with the great longing of St. Paul for his death: 'To depart is far better; to die is gain.' It is so with the revelation of the worship of the ransomed.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> St. John v. 28.

Yes, consciousness lives on beyond the grave. I question much if, even in the hour of seeming unconsciousness in death, the soul is really so. Who shall say that it is not the developed consciousness of the spirit that makes it all unconscious to the things of sense? Consciousness lives on. This moment consciously in the body : the next moment consciously out of the body. This moment consciously far from Him : the next moment consciously in the presence of God. Such is death ; not only a change of the circumstances of life, but a conscious change. 'Absent from the body, present with the Lord.'<sup>1</sup> O, who can anticipate the joy of that moment when the faithful consciously passes into the bliss of the life of Paradise?

Memory lives on. I were not really myself, were I to be there forgetful of the past. Memory is the one link between myself in the present and myself in the past. By it alone am I cognisant of my personal identity.

But since I live on in the fulness of my personality in the land beyond the grave, the memories of time follow me there ; the lives of time live on there. The father is still the father ; the brother is still the brother ; the child is still the child. 'I have five brethren.' And there, in the clearer light and purer love of that fair land, our faithful ones love us with an intenser love, and aid us with a mightier ministry.

G. BODY, '*The Revelation of Paradise.*'—*A Sermon.*

Is it not a beautiful thought that they may know and feel their nearness with us, though we cannot feel it with them? That they are hidden only because they have come nearer, and need to be known by powers more intimate, more penetrating, more true—which give us true *knowledge*, without that distance and separation which here must baffle us when most we feel our nearness—powers, for the true use of which we must wait as they have waited and not in vain. Even of our friends, as well as of our God, we may truly say, 'Now we see through a glass darkly,' through sensuous images, through feeble words, through shrinking sensibilities, that dare not let the true soul

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 8.



appear ; but then we shall know them even as God knows us, living in them, our natures rich with their life, their joys our own. We may be rid of this self-limitation some day. Their deliverance is the pledge of ours, for in actual verity we are not many, but one.

J. HINTON, *Life and Letters*.

Nothing in Scripture suggests the thought of a suspension of conscious existence at the moment of death. Whatever latitude of interpretation we give to the framework of the parable (if it be a parable, and not rather a history) of the Rich Man and Lazarus,<sup>1</sup> it suggests the thought of a continuity of consciousness. The promise to the repentant robber who sought to be remembered in the far-off coming of the kingdom of Christ, 'This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise,'<sup>2</sup> assumes that continuity. St. Paul rests in that belief when he judges it 'far better' to 'depart and be with Christ'<sup>3</sup> than to continue his labour upon earth. St. John assumes it throughout the Apocalypse. The souls that are under the altar cry out, 'How long, O Lord, how long?'<sup>4</sup> The four-and-twenty elders are round about the throne and lift up their voices in praise.<sup>5</sup> The hundred and forty and four thousand of the sealed ones, the great multitude that no man can number that came out of great tribulation, are guided by the Lamb to the living fountains of waters.<sup>6</sup> Our Lord and the writers of the New Testament in this instance reproduce the belief which they found current among their countrymen.

Starting, then, from the continuity of consciousness, we may ask what are its main activities. It lies in the nature of the case that there is a cessation of the manifold impressions which we have received through the senses as they now are.

The pains and pleasures of the body, such as they are, belong to the past, though new pains and pleasures may take their place. The hints of Scripture point to memory as the

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xvi. 19-31.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. vi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke xxiii. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. vii. 17.

chief energy of the soul under its new conditions of existence. The words of Abraham to the rich man in Hades were, 'Son, remember.' He was to survey the whole extent of that life in which he had received his good things and had cared for little or nothing else. And those words at least fall in with some of the known facts of consciousness in this life. To many—notably, it is said, to those who have been in peril of sudden death by drowning, and have, as it were, tasted its experiences—there comes, as in a moment of time, the unrolling of the scroll of their whole past lives. Their memory acts with a new intensity and with an almost inconceivable rapidity. . . .

Even under the conditions of a calmer death, we note often something of the same kind. The mind goes back to the remote part of its life, and the scenes of childhood and the old familiar faces come back with a long-vanished distinctness.

It is almost inconceivable that such a retrospect should not affect every soul in which there is any capacity for growth. And so far as our knowledge extends, we cannot pronounce of any individual soul that it has lost all such capacity. . . .

In that act of memory, when the impressions of the outer world are withdrawn, consciousness passes into conscience. . . .

In this sense it may be true that the repentance that comes after death for those in whom the capacity for it has not been extinguished may be more deep than any that has been known in life. . . . By the soul's accepting the pain and the shame and the self-loathing which the memory of the past brings with it, as the punishment which it has deserved, the scourge may wound only to heal, and develop an ever-increasing sense of the everlasting covenant of peace.

E. H. PLUMPTRE, *The Spirits in Prison*.

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life of Thine elect, grant that those who have been joined with us in earthly love and the ministration of grace may live with us for ever in the mansions of our Father's house, for which we long; and though by the malice of the Tempter they may have been

polluted by many stains of sin, yet do Thou, O Lord, Who alone art mighty, remember their offences no more, that the Accuser of the brethren may have no power to touch them in the great day, but, beholding them, by Thy mercy, partakers of Thy beatitude, may confess the glory of Thy triumph, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen. *The Manual of Intercessory Prayer.*

Oh ! how blest are ye whose toils are ended !  
Who through death have unto God ascended,  
Ye have arisen  
From the cares which keep us still in prison.

We are still as in a dungeon living,  
Still oppressed with sorrow and misgiving ;  
Our undertakings  
Are but toils and troubles, and heart-breakings.

Ye, meanwhile, are in your chambers sleeping ;  
Quiet, and set free from all our weeping ;  
No cross nor trial  
Hinders your enjoyments with denial.

Christ has wiped away your fears for ever ;  
Ye have that for which we still endeavour.  
To you are chaunted  
Songs which yet no mortal ear have haunted.

Ah, who would not then depart with gladness  
To inherit heaven for earthly sadness ?  
Who here would languish  
Longer in bewailing and in anguish ?

Come, O Christ, and loose the chains that bind us ;  
Lead us forth and cast this world behind us.  
With Thee, the Anointed,  
Finds the soul its joy and rest appointed.

*From the German of SALIS, translated by LONGFELLOW.*



THOUGH WE BE TIED  
AND BOUND WITH THE  
CHAIN OF OUR SINS





## CHAPTER IV.

### Recognition beyond the Veil.

*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*—2 Sam. xii. 23.

WILL there be in that region of preparation, as in the ultimate blessedness of the saints, a mutual recognition among those who are thus partakers of the inheritance of the Kingdom?

That is, perhaps, of all questions that rise up in men's minds, as they look forward into the dim unseen, the one on which they most crave for certainty. The hopes of men, in Christian or pre-Christian times, have for the most part made answer to themselves. They have cherished the belief, as they laid loved ones in the earth, that the parting was not to be for ever, that they should meet again under better and happier conditions, that misunderstandings and mistakes should no longer cloud the communion of soul with soul. They look back on the friendships of their lives, or the relationships which are closer than friendships, and feel how little they have really known of those even with whom they were in daily converse.

Nor e'en the tenderest heart, and next our own,  
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh.<sup>1</sup>

Every poet who has ever ventured to picture to himself the dwelling-place of the dead, from Homer to Dante, has shown that for him an immortality without recognition was a thing hardly conceivable. . . .

It is clear, I think, that, though we cannot point to distinctly revealed declarations that so it shall be, the whole drift of the teaching of Scripture tends in that direction. When

<sup>1</sup> J. Keble.

David faces the death of his child with a restored cheerfulness, it is because he can say, 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.' Abraham, Lazarus and the rich man identify each other. Philemon was to receive back the fugitive Onesimus, not as a slave, but as a brother beloved, *for ever*,<sup>1</sup> The seer of the Apocalypse recognises the four-and-twenty elders and the hundred and forty-four thousand, and those whose names were in the Lamb's book of life, and those who were slain for the Word of God.<sup>2</sup> Can we form any conception of the life after death which shall include the idea of the communion of saints and the consciousness of belonging to the great family of God, of being members of the body of Christ, and yet exclude the thought of recognition?

E. H. PLUMPTRE, *The Spirits in Prison*.

I love you, my sweet children, who are gone  
 Into another mansion; but I know  
 I love you not as I shall love you yet.  
 I love you, sweet dead children; there are none  
 In the land to which ye vanished to go,  
 Whose hearts more truly on your hearts are set—  
 Yet should I die of grief to love you only so.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

I must confess, as the experience of my own soul, that the expectation of loving my friends in heaven principally kindles my love to them while on earth. If I thought I should never know, and consequently never love, them after this life, I should number them with temporal things, and love them as such; but I now delightfully converse with my pious friends, in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them for ever; and I take comfort in those that are dead or absent, believing that I shall shortly meet them in heaven, and love them with a heavenly love.

BAXTER.

<sup>1</sup> Philem. v. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iv. 4; vi. 9; vii. 4; xxi. 27.

A true idea of the life to come will give a fresh interest to the life that now is. For instance, as to the friends that we meet here :—what interest does it give to the few moments in which the children of God are thrown together, when we recollect that we may meet each other, and recognise each other, in the world to come ! We may be with them only for a day, but we may be beginning an acquaintance that is to last for ever.

BISHOP WEBB, *On the Holy Spirit.*

The face will shine  
 Upon me, while I muse alone ;  
 And that dear voice, I once have known,  
 Still speak to me of me and mine.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me  
 For days of happy commune dead ;  
 Less yearning for the friendship fled,  
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam.*

From the consciousness of the departed arises the assurance of the heavenly recognition of saint by saint . . . The saints 'in prison' recognised the Spirit of Jesus when He came and preached to them. So with all the faithful departed. They recognise the Holy Mother, they recognise each one of 'the glorious company of the Apostles,' each one of 'the goodly fellowship of the Prophets,' each one of 'the noble army of Martyrs.' In all the beauties of their several characters each one is there fully known. But we must not now so confine the word 'saint.' I mean by it not only those whom the Church recognises as possessing a special sanctity, but all who are with Christ. There is a recognition of each by each. There the mother recognises her child, and the child his mother. There the husband recognises the long-mourned wife, and the wife her husband. There brother meets sister, and friend meets friend in holy joy. There the poor man greets his benefactor and receives him 'into everlasting habitations' . . . There is following on this mutual recognition of



loved ones in Paradise, the assurance of blessed intercourse with them. There will be felt the power of special ties, of special love. The love of Jesus possessing the heart fully will not expel other loves . . . Sweet intercourse with Jesus will not make the elect to be indifferent to the intercourse of spirit with spirit. The joys that flow to the redeemed in Paradise from Christ will not contract the limits of their love, but will cause those limits to expand, and that love to increase in fervour. What is called 'individual Christianity' is not the ideal of Paradise any more than it is of earth. There as here we are members of a great family, children of a family in which our hearts beat high with love to the brethren. Nor will the wide embrace of that love militate against our feeling the power of special attractions and loving our own with a special love. On earth special loves strengthen and do not weaken general love. He who is most loving in his home is, as a rule, most loving in the world. I say loving our own, for the great ties of earth are recognised as still continuing there. 'I have five brethren' . . . The child and the parent each recognise the special relations that bind them in one. The husband and wife, there reunited together, live their life with Christ. The pastor claims his spiritual children there, as his joy and crown of rejoicing. Their lives are blended there. One common love binds hearts in one, one common toil keeps them in an union which knows no separation, one common interest is there shared. The ties of earth, O doubt it not, live on there, for these ties are the creation of God, and those whom He thus binds together are joined in an union which cannot be broken save by eternal death. But if these ties live on, in those who possess individuality and consciousness, and the power of mutual recognition, then we have the assurance that the redeemed in Paradise have sweet intercourse with each other. Special intercourse, the result of special ties, general intercourse flowing from that common tie of union with God in Christ which binds them all into one family . . . Think, then, of the joy of the faithful in Paradise in this holy intercourse with the great multitude. Think, then, of their joy in those

special friendships which perpetuate there the sweet ties of earth. And as thus thou thinkest let thy heart beat high with the joy of sympathy as thou realisest the sweet intercourse they enjoy whom thou hast lost from earth.

G. BODY, *The Present State of the Faithful Departed.*

### Prayer.

Almighty, Everlasting God, in Whose hand are all Thy servants, and Who art of great mercy to all; pour out Thy Spirit upon all with whom our souls have been knit together, whether they be yet among us or have passed from hence; and if we see each other here on earth face to face no more, may we be gathered together with all Thy saints before the throne of Thy glory, and share that communion which shall know no end; through Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Eucharistic Manual.*

## CHAPTER V.

### Paradise.

*The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.—Isaiah li. 3.*

*In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.—St. John xiv. 2.*

WHEREVER Paradise may be, whoever of the blessed is there, is with Him, Who is everywhere.

Where are the saints, think we? There where it is well. What seekest thou more? Thou knowest not the place, but think on their desert. Wherever they are, they are with God.

S. AUGUSTINE.

Paradise is not Heaven; it is the outer court of Heaven; as understood by the students of Holy Scripture in our Lord's time, it meant the gardens of delight about the Palace of God. . . .

Modern writers think 'Paradise' is a Persian word, though we find it in our Hebrew Bibles as far back as the writings of Solomon. Its derivation is not absolutely certain. But whatever its derivation, whether the word is Hebrew or Persian, it is used both by inspired and uninspired writers in the same sense: that of an enclosure or park. In the East people spoke of a royal paradise as we speak of a royal park, and in somewhat the same sense. And this is what it invariably meant,

both in Scripture and in classical writers, *a royal park surrounding a palace*, or connected with the palace of a king.

In the Septuagint Eden is called by this name, and has been called so ever since. And so, from being a name given by the Jews to the Garden of Eden, it was a name which they gave to those abodes of the faithful departed which they otherwise called 'the bosoms of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' And in this sense it is used by our Lord and His Apostles.

Our Lord's exact words on the cross to the penitent malefactor are, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in *the Paradise*,' *i.e.* the Paradise of God: one 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' And St. Paul, in 2 Cor. xii. 4, says that he was 'caught up into *the Paradise*.' So our Lord, in Rev. ii. 7 by the mouth of St. John, promises to those who retain to the end their 'first love' for Him, that He Himself will give them to eat of the tree of immortality which is in the midst of *the Paradise of God*. And now in our day the word only means that place of rest above of which our Lord, St. Paul, and St. John speak: it has fallen out of use as a common word, and since our Lord uttered it on the cross it has been consecrated to mean only that 'Sabbath-rest which remaineth for the people of God.' Let us gather up two or three reflections suggested by the use and meaning of this word, and see what light it throws on the state of the faithful departed.

1. It was a *safely-enclosed* park, an enclosure where trees were reared. So Paradise is a place of *perfect security*, where the righteous, as trees of the Lord's planting, are being fitted perfectly for Heaven. It is a place into which no enemy of man's happiness, no temptation, can enter. The Paradise of God will be secured against all evil. The enemy of man was able to creep into Eden; but into the home of the faithful departed no evil can come. And no earthly home now, however guarded, can keep out sin, sorrow, sickness and death:—



There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
 But one dead lamb is there :  
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
 But has one vacant chair.<sup>1</sup>

But none of these things can reach us there. There 'the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.'<sup>2</sup> No danger can enter there ; there is perfect security for evermore.

2. The use and meaning of the word 'Paradise' suggests a further thought in connection with the state of the faithful departed. As used in Scripture and elsewhere, it means a *royal* park and palace. It is ever called in Scripture 'The King's paradise' ; paradises were made by kings and for kings ; they were laid out and beautified for their pleasure ; they were their favourite resorts. How much light does this thought throw on the happiness of the Paradise above ! How transcendent must be its beauty ! How unspeakable its joys ! It is a place prepared not only for the happiness of the saints, but, in the first instance, for the pleasure of our King and our Lord. It was specially made by Him and for Him, by Whom and for Whom all things were made. How great, then, must be its beauty ! How exquisite its architecture ! How infinite its delights ! Solomon spent all the resources of his wisdom in laying out royal paradises for himself : an eastern paradise was, in its beauty, worthy of the royal palace which it surrounded, and to which it led ; so the 'Paradise' of God is, for glory and for beauty, worthy of that 'City of God' which it surrounds : worthy of that palace where God dwells : of that 'city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God' : worthy to be the outer courts through which they that are saved will pass under those gates of pearl, and into those streets of gold. It is a place of preparation for the 'fulness of joy' in heaven, though not of the actual possession of those joys.

3. Though every paradise was laid out and adorned for the

<sup>1</sup> Longfellow.

<sup>2</sup> Wisdom iii. 1.

pleasure of a king, and of those guests who were privileged to be invited there, it was especially his summer residence, to which he resorted for *rest and repose*. And the word speaks to us chiefly of refreshment, rest, and repose: of that rest which the sick, the poor, the guilty, the weary, each in his own way, so often and so ardently long for: of that rest, the thought of which is so welcome to this age of turmoil and anxiety, of hurrying to and fro, of struggling for existence. It does not speak to us, as the word 'Heaven' does, of glory and unwearied service and eternal praise, so much as of safety and repose: of the healing of the wounds of sin and sorrow after the battle of life: the call of souls thither seems like the voice of Christ saying, 'Come ye apart and rest a while.'<sup>1</sup>

And everything connected with the word 'paradise,' as used in the Old Testament scriptures and elsewhere, speaks to us of this refreshing rest. . . . The imagery is used in Scripture to set before us the rest and peace of that place where the faithful departed are, that place where the sheep of Christ will be safe in the fold of the Good Shepherd, when it calls that place the 'Paradise' of God. This is the imagery of the twenty-third Psalm, which expressly describes that happy place in figurative language. It is our Lord's own description, in figurative language, of that place of rest into which His spirit was to enter after the agony of the Cross was over, and into which He promised the penitent robber that he should immediately follow Him. . . .

And, lastly, the meaning of the word reminds us that paradise is a place where the faithful departed have the presence of Christ and the vision of God. Though holy patriarchs, saints, and angels have each their own blessed employment there, since the Incarnation and death of Christ, and His descent into the world of spirits, death is no longer spoken of as a departing to be with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but a departing 'to be with Christ, which is far better.' . . .

It is now Christ Himself who is to feed us, in Paradise and in Heaven, and who is to lead us to the living waters there.

<sup>1</sup> Mark vi. 31.

His promise is that *He Himself* will give to the faithful departed to eat of the tree of Life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.<sup>1</sup>

J. C. BELLETT, *The Dead in Christ*.

## The Region of Light.

*Look for your Shepherd, He shall give you everlasting rest ; for He is nigh at hand that shall come in the end of the world. Be ready to the reward of the kingdom, for the everlasting light shall shine upon you for evermore.*—2 Esdras ii. 34, 35.

*Thou hast delivered my soul from death and my feet from falling : that I may walk before God in the light of the living.*—Psalm lvi. 13.  
P. B. V.

THE souls of those who are departed hence in the grace of God are in inconceivable bliss—a bliss to which every spiritual bliss in this life is joylessness. Conceive what bliss to know that in all that boundless eternity they shall for ever see God ! And they know what eternity is ! Time has been put aside with the mortal clay ; they live years in moments ; they live already the life of spirits, and in Jesus, as their Judge, they have seen God. . . .

The souls of the saved must not only have seen Jesus, and His loving, even though reproachful, Eye, but must have seen in It all that ineffable love of God. They must know what it is to behold God ; although not fully (for they will have seen the Godhead only through the veil of the Humanity of Jesus), they will have seen that Light which, on earth, eye cannot see and live. They will have been immersed into the Ocean of Joy ; they will have adored Jesus face to face. ‘What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of men conceived,’ and could not see or hear here and live, they will have seen and heard, and have, not conceived only, but have known, the transcendent beauty, and glory, and majesty, and Divinity, of Jesus. They will have known ‘what Jesus ’tis to love,’ as

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii. 7 ; vii. 17.

saints, too, cannot know in this life. What if the further sight be delayed? What if they know that it is through their own inadequate sorrow for any grievous forgiven sins, or for their cleaving to things temporal, or for their own lack of thirsting to behold the living God, while in this life, or for tepidity, or sloth, that that Beatific Vision is delayed? They know with absolute certainty that it is delayed only, that they shall behold the All-Holy Trinity for ever.

Then, too, they cannot sin. O joy of joys!—joy, above all other joys! joy, without which to see the face of God would be utter misery—that the will, fixed and motionless, adhering immovably to the Will of God, and beating with one pulse with the pulses of the Divine Heart, cannot, by the very faintest motion of impulse, look away for one twinkling of an eye from the adorable Will of God. . . .

But the absence of the capability of sinning is itself not all. There are the continual graces and consolations and influences of the good-pleasure of God. To those who have felt them here, it is like being already out of the body, except that the weakness of the body makes itself mostly felt. But St. Paul says, ‘Whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth.’<sup>1</sup> There, there is no body to fatigue, no consciousness that the soul will have again to fall back into its wonted state, no possibility of distractions darting in. For this is its one state: to long for the sight of God, whenever it shall be His good pleasure that the soul should see Him, and not one moment sooner. There can be no impatience there, no anticipation of God’s Will; no faintest wish that it should be other than it is; no wish to know even what it is, further than it feels. It is a silent, peaceful land of expectation.

E. B. PUSEY, *Addresses*

### Prayer.

O Eternal Lord God, Who holdest all souls in life, we beseech Thee to shed forth upon thy whole Church in Paradise

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 2.



and on earth the bright beams of Thy heavenly light and comfort, and grant that we, following the good examples of those who have served Thee here, and are at rest, may at length enter with them into Thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. W. E. SCUDAMORE.

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Rest of Paradise.

*Abide still, O my people, and take thy rest, for thy quietness shall come.*—2 Esdras ii. 24.

*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours.*—Rev. xiv. 13.

THE first characteristic of Christian death is its restfulness. The dead are at rest from the confusing and distracting succession of interests and excitements, of sensuous pains and pleasures. No fresh temptations can assail them. If they cannot break out into new action, nothing can break in to disturb them with new troubles. It is this absolute stillness of the dead which makes us unable, except in symbols and poetry, to picture to ourselves the life of Paradise. Purely spiritual existence is to us an unimaginable thing. All we can say about it is that every condition of life with which we are acquainted is directly reversed.

But it would be totally at variance with Scripture to suppose that the departed, because they are incapable of positive commerce with the outer world, must therefore be in a state of swoon or abeyance. No such notion is intended when they are said in the Bible to have fallen asleep, or to have been laid to rest. The word is expressive of repose, but not of vacancy. As Christ, on passing out of this world into 'Hell,' was 'quickened in spirit,'<sup>1</sup> so are others. The spirit is at rest from outward activities and impressions in order that it may be free to develop a whole world of inward consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. Peter iii. 18.

Here we have had hard work to recall ourselves from what is phenomenal to what is real. But to the dead the task is easy. It is their sole occupation. Having no outlet of escape, such as we have, into the amusements of temporal existence, they sound the things which are eternal.

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

The blessed dead in Paradise are at rest, to sum up much in the fewest words. This is a distinct revelation of Holy Scripture, and one which we might have been sure of, even without its direct testimony. In life they took their Master at His word ; 'wearied and heavy-laden'—as all at times must consciously be—'they came to Him, and He gave them rest.' Their being at rest is only a further, higher, stage of this ; not sleep, a passing away, a time of waiting in objectless tranquillity. There is evidence that former faculties may have received marvellous accessions of power. Although their state is not one of perfect fruition. . . . They know that they are growing more fit for the full fruition of God's Presence, more meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light.

R. G. SWAYNE, *The Blessed Dead in Paradise*.

### The Place where is no Weeping, Sorrow or Heaviness.

*The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction : but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality.*—Wisdom of Solomon iii. 1-4.

*The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.*—Isaiah xxxii. 17.

*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*—Heb. iv. 9.

PARADISE ! How eagerly we welcome this word from the lips of Jesus. It is itself a great revelation, and marks a crisis in men's conception of the intermediate state.

Hitherto it had been Hades, the unseen, the land of impenetrable darkness, the unknowable. 'Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hades.' But the unseen is now visible to faith; the darkness is scattered that, as a thick cloud, hid it from our view; the unknowable is revealed to us as Paradise—the anti-type of the primeval Eden, Paradise—the garden of the Lord, where the voice of the Lord God ever is heard, walking, and where all is rest and satisfaction and peace. . . .

There is a wise purpose, doubtless, in the reticence of Scripture as to the locality of Paradise. God would have us think of it rather as a state than a place. Where it is it matters little; what it is, is the great subject of interest to us. And by its silence as to the locality of Paradise, the Bible fixes our thoughts on it as a state of life. It teaches us to believe that the souls of the faithful between death and the second Advent are in a state of rest in the Paradise of God.

They are in the *rest of cessation from toil*. 'There the weary are at rest.' Toil under the conditions of conflict and anxiety is the prominent feature of Christian life. And O how all but crushing is the sense of weariness under the ceaseless strain and anxious care of life! Yet, wearied as we are, we cannot rest, save for a passing while. We must pray on, work on, fight on, day by day and hour by hour. At length, very tired, we find ourselves at the evening of life, and soon comes the call to cease from toil and strife and care, and to lie down at the feet of God and rest. Happy indeed are they who, in Paradise, rest from toil.

They are in the *rest of satisfaction*. Unsatisfied longings ever produce unrest. Only they whose felt needs are fully met rest in joy. But there—there are no unsatisfied desires. 'There they hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the Throne doth feed them.' The intellect that craves for knowledge is satisfied with Divine revelations of the truth; the heart that craves to love, and to be loved, is satisfied with the full communication of Divine love; the will that craves for liberty and fulness of strength is satisfied with the energies of Divine grace; the conscience



that craves for deep and sustained peace is satisfied with perfect peace, and the assurance of full and free forgiveness ; and so satisfied, every portion of their mystic being rests.

They are in the *rest of expectation*. The faithful know the bliss of anticipated joy. 'The pleasures of hope' are theirs. They are not in the final state of men ; they are not yet glorified, but are still numbered with the justified. Not yet are they perfected in spirit ; not yet are they re-united with their bodies, now transfigured with Divine beauty ; not yet are they in the very presence-chamber of God and the Lamb.

They, like us, are on the watch-tower of Christian expectation, with bated breath and strained eye, 'waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.' Ever does their cry go up, 'How long, O Lord, how long?' But even in their cry they rest, for their rest is the rest of confident hope. Hope in them is so firm, and so intense, that it approaches to fruition ; and as they taste by hope sweet foretaste of Heaven's bliss, they rest with the rest of expectation.

G. BODY, '*The Revelation of Paradise.*'—*A Sermon.*

O God of Saints, to Thee we cry ;  
O Saviour, plead for us on high ;  
O Holy Ghost, our Guide and Friend,  
Grant us Thy grace till life shall end ;  
That with all Saints our rest may be  
In that bright Paradise with Thee.

*Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 425.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Progress in Paradise.

*Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.*—Hosea vi. 3.

*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*—Proverbs iv. 18.

GOD knows how far from perfection we are ! But we are going on with our training ; and God will continue the education on the other side of the Veil. Age after age we shall go on knowing God more, and becoming more and more able to ' see God ' and to love Him. All that is ' of the earth, earthy ' will be gone.

BISHOP WILKINSON, *The Communion of Saints*.

From the time when you receive the franchise of the Kingdom of Heaven, your life is to be one of eternal progress. Christ is come that you may have ' life,' here on earth, and that you may have it ' more abundantly.'<sup>1</sup> Surely, then, the true ' life '—the life of love, of interest, and of sympathy—will be continued. Can we doubt it? Our Lord hath told us that even outside His kingdom there is remembrance of friends and of brethren . . . Shall not we, then, carry upon our hearts before the Throne of God the thoughts of our former work and friends and sympathies, so far as God has cleansed and purified them, and brought them into His own Kingdom, making every thought, every imagination, obedient to Jesus Christ?

In the various *works* that God gives us to do :—may we not be beginning, here upon earth, the ' works ' which are to

<sup>1</sup> St. John x. 10.

'follow' us, the undertakings for the Kingdom of God, in which we shall continue an interest hereafter?

When men are just beginning to see into the great intricacies of God's world—when they are beginning to understand a little what Art and Science really mean—we see them, time after time, hurried away and their life apparently broken short. And yet, surely, it is not so: surely the fundamental laws of Science and Art,—the laws of harmony, for instance, with regard to music,—may be understood, in a deeper measure, hereafter. May not the man of science, may not the artist, be allowed to see, hereafter, the great principles upon which Art and Science rest, so as to enter into them, and even practise them, yet more thoroughly and perfectly? In all the 'secular' employments and tastes of your life, if they be healthy and pure, there may be, nay, without a doubt there will be, in very truth a continuity.

BISHOP WEBB, *On the Holy Spirit*.

May we not think that the new conditions of the life after death will be, for those who have in any measure sought and are still seeking for light, favourable also to the larger knowledge of Divine Truth? The soul may not as yet be ripe for the Beatific Vision, and may have to wait for the time when it shall know even as also it is known. But the transition from our present partial to that complete knowledge may legitimately be thought of as gradual, rather than instantaneous. The law that 'whosoever willeth to do the will of the Father shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God,'<sup>1</sup> gives a basis for the hope which the wisest of our teachers, not of one school only but of all, have in these latter days led us to cherish as to those whom involuntary ignorance or invincible prejudice has kept during life from the full apprehension of revealed truth, or indeed from any knowledge of that truth at all. There those whose life has been spent in mutual bitterness, or ceaseless controversy, may find themselves at once in the wrong and in the

<sup>1</sup> St. John vii. 17.

right, and dwell together under the shadow of the wings of God. There the eyes that were dim shall see, and the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly. The promise that he that seeks shall find, that to him that knocketh at the gate of the Father's house it shall at last be opened, which seemed during life to tarry so long for its fulfilment, shall be seen at last not to fail. Men shall see that systems which were only partially true, which contained a large admixture of weak and beggarly elements, have yet been a schoolmaster, leading men to Christ as the true Teacher. He has yet 'many things to say unto us'<sup>1</sup> which now we cannot bear, partly because our organs of spiritual discernment have been more or less atrophied by disease, partly also because, so far as they have been exercised at all, it has been in an environment that was unfavourable to their expansion.

With the vast majority who pass out of this life with the merest elements of human or divine knowledge, stunted, enfeebled, almost in the stage of child-like ignorance, it is manifest that, if they are to be fitted for the apprehension of the truth in its completeness, there must be (I say not how, or through what discipline or help) a development of capacities that are now latent, as well as the extension of the range of action of capacities that are now vigorous and strong. We find it hard to picture to ourselves the future life of one who dies in infancy, or the ignorance which seems to us to reduce the life of man almost to the level of the brute, still more, perhaps, that of one who has passed away in insanity. All we can do is to cling to the belief that the Christ is now what He was when He laid His hands upon the little ones of Galilee, and took them up in His arms and blessed them; as He was when He cast out the evil spirit from the frenzied Gadarene, so that He sat at the Master's feet, clothed and in his right mind. 'In the Father's house there are many mansions,'<sup>2</sup> many resting-

<sup>1</sup> St. John xvi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xiv. 2.



places which He has gone to prepare for them, according to their character and capacities. We may well leave the lambs of the flock, to whatever fold they may belong, under the guidance of the Good Shepherd. The little ones, of whom He said that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven, are safe in the school of the Great Teacher.

E. H. PLUMPTRE, *The Spirits in Prison*.

### Growth in Holiness.

*Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*—Phil. i. 6.

IN one sense all Christians die with their work unfinished. Let them have chastened themselves all their lives long, and lived in faith and obedience, yet still there is much in them unsubdued—much pride, much ignorance, much unrepented, unknown sin, much inconsistency, much irregularity in prayer, much lightness and frivolity of thought. Who can tell, then, but, in God's mercy, the time of waiting between death and Christ's coming may be profitable to those who have been His true servants here, as a time of maturing that fruit of grace, but partly formed in them in this life—a school-time of contemplation, as this world is a discipline of active service? Such, surely, is the force of the Apostle's words, that, 'He that hath begun a good work in us, will perform it *until* the day of Jesus Christ'—*until*, not *at*, not stopping it with death—but carrying it on to the Resurrection. And this, which will be accorded to all saints, will be profitable to each in proportion to the degree of holiness in which he dies; for as we are expressly told that in one sense the spirits of the just are *perfected* on their death, it follows that the greater advance each has made here, the higher will be the line of his subsequent growth between death and the Resurrection.

J. H. NEWMAN, *Parochial Sermons*, Vol. III.

Those we call the dead  
Are breathers of an ampler day  
For ever nobler ends !

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*.

The blessed dead must be in a state of waiting, for 'they,' the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us, 'without us cannot be made perfect,'<sup>1</sup> and their holiness—and holiness is a very high and awful thought for men—must be *perfected* before they can 'see the Lord.'

For certainly Scripture is clear on the point, which surely right reason itself would suggest to us, that God's work goes on in the soul after death. Even in the old dispensation, and all the imperfect views of immortality, the Psalmist, in one of his flashes of vision, saw that 'they go from strength to strength, until before the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Zion.'<sup>2</sup> St. Paul was 'confident,' as to God's people, that He Who had 'begun a good work' in them, would perform it *until 'the day of Jesus Christ.'* He was equally confident that Christ's people at Corinth would be, by God's power, brought to blamelessness '*in the day of Jesus Christ.*' He prayed for his converts at Thessalonica, that their whole selves, 'spirit, soul, and body, might be blameless,' by the same '*day of Jesus Christ.*' And the Wise Man, in the old dispensation, foretold us in the Proverbs that there would be a steady and progressive advancement of the righteous up to 'the perfect day.' 'Perfection' and 'holiness' are high, almost unimaginable, attainments for mortal man, and the thought of this alone would forbid us to limit such sayings to the close of probation. But in no case can we place that limit, for it is remarkable, and too often forgotten, that the *objective*, so to speak, of the Apostolic vision is not death, but 'the day of the Lord.' It is true that the main direction of a soul *to God* or *away from God* is fixed by its time of probation here ; but it has been beautifully and truly said, that though the tree may lie in *the direction* in which it falls, there is much of shaping and carving for the Master-

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

Carpenter to do upon the tree before it is fitted to be a pillar in the heavenly temple. God's work of cleansing and completing, we may, then, be sure, goes on in that mysterious land where 'they rest from their labours,' where they are in preparation for completed blessedness.

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *Sunlight and Shadow in the Christian Life*.

I can form no real conception of the present life of the blessed dead which does not include the thought of their *progressive growth in holiness*. Progress is inseparable from the very idea of life, unless perfection itself shall have been attained. And that this is not *their* case is one of the distinct revelations with regard to their present state which God has given us. The 'souls under the altar,' in St. John's vision, were heard by him asking, almost anxiously, for a further realisation of their hopes: 'How long, O Master, holy and true?' And to each one was a white robe given, and they were bidden rest a little longer. And whatever may be the exact meaning of the 'white robe,' it clearly indicates the covering over of natural imperfection, and the inward peace and comfort which would thence ensue.

It seems to me one of the most certain inferences from the teaching of God's Word, that the blessed dead must grow in grace. How can it be otherwise, except they are sleeping in unconsciousness? for they are 'with Christ'<sup>1</sup> in truth, if not the *absolute* truth, which is reserved for a still higher state—for that state for which their 'white robe' is their preparation. I cannot indeed explain this, even to myself. I cannot pierce the mystery of Christ's present life between His going away from earth and His return to it. We know that the intercessions of the Man Christ Jesus within the veil will not cease until all things are put under Him. And His Presence now in the world unseen must be fraught with inconceivable blessing, however it may operate; and whatever the manner of its operation, the blessed dead are rejoicing in its warmth and

<sup>1</sup> Phil. i. 23.

brightness. It may be to them still as when the beams of the sun bring light to the natural world, before the orb itself appears above the horizon. But they feel the glow and are made glad by it; and in its radiance they spring upwards towards its full manifestation. How can they *not* grow in holiness when they live in the Presence of Christ, instead of an evil world; and each longing that was once, perhaps, for the vain counterfeits of human good, is now sent straight towards the reality?

O, if it has been our happiness to discern in those we have loved on earth the presence of heavenly graces, and now that they are gone it is our chief solace to recall them, apart from the intermingling of human imperfections—let us be sure that now the reality is outstripping our fondest imaginations, and the growth of Paradise is rearing flowers of a beauty which our dull hearts cannot yet conceive.

R. G. SWAYNE, *The Blessed Dead in Paradise.*

As long as with us shall remain

The joy of Paradise, so long our love  
Such vesture radiant round us shall retain.

Its brightness doth our ardour's measure prove.  
The ardour comes from vision, and that grows,  
As it has grace its natural strength above.

And when re clothed with flesh our body shows,

Glorious and holy, then our being's bliss  
Will be more sweet as it completeness knows;

And so will grow and brighten in us this,  
The light the Chief Good gives of His free grace,  
The light by which we see Him as He is.

And thus that vision needs must grow apace,  
Grow, too, the ardour kindled by that sight;  
Grow, too, the brightness shed from it through space.

But as a coal that giveth flame and light,  
Yet these by its white heat surpasseth so,  
That its own aspect still maintains its right,



So shall the glory that doth round us show  
Yield in its radiance to the fleshly frame  
Which now the earth hides sepulchred below ;  
Nor shall we wearied grow with that bright flame,  
For all our body's organs will be strong  
For every object that delights the same.

DANTE, *Paradiso*, Canto xiv., translated by E. H. PLUMPTRE.

### Prayer.

Jesu our Master, do Thou meet us while we walk by the way and long to reach the dear country ; so that, following Thy light, we may keep the way of righteousness and never wander away into the dread darkness of this world's night ; while Thou, Who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, art shining within us.

O Christ, our God and our hope, we earnestly pray, implore and beseech Thee that, walking by Thy help, we may come unto Thee and rest in Thee. For Thou art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, without Whom no man cometh unto the Father. For Thee we long, most gracious and glorious Lord.

O Brightness of the Father's glory, Who sittest upon the cherubims, and piercest to the lowest depths beneath, O true Light, Light of lights, Light inextinguishable, on Whom the angels love to look ! Behold our hearts are Thine, dispel their darkness, and pour into us more fully the brightness of Thy love. Give Thyself, O God, to us. Return to us that by Thy continual help we may be enabled to live a holy, pious, and just life and may never stray until Thou bring our whole being to the peace of our dear country, Jerusalem, and stablish us for ever, O God, our merciful God. Amen.

*The Book of Private Prayer.*

Rest eternal grant to Thy Saints, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. Amen.

O think of that assembly !  
Their beauty and their peace ;  
Souls perfect, yet receiving  
Love's infinite increase.  
In full illumination,  
Knowing as they are known,  
The transitory ended,  
And the imperfect flown.

Henceforward, and for ever,  
They live, live unto God ;  
He is their source, their object,  
Their light, and their abode.  
As sea-flowers in the ocean,  
As white clouds in the air,  
He forms them and expands them,  
Is round them everywhere.

His joy is through them spreading ;  
His Will, their will sustains ;  
Joint heirs, in rich possession,  
Of Christ's eternal gains.  
With vision all unclouded,  
They see Him face to face,  
Share in His intercessions,  
And ministries of grace.

They rest from all their labours,  
Yet serve Him day and night :  
Their earthly forms are sleeping,  
But they, in deep delight,  
Wait for the Resurrection,  
Of Life the perfect Crown,  
The time of Restitution,  
Christ's triumph, and their own.

From henceforth, saith the Spirit,  
Write, 'Blessed are the dead';  
Believe that in Christ's Kingdom  
All change must higher lead;  
And when, in bitter anguish,  
You close some tender eyes,  
Doubt not they are beholding  
The King of Paradise.

C. M. NOEL.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Presence of Christ.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*—1 Thess. v. 10.

*Having the desire to depart, and be with Christ; for it is very far better.*—Phil. i. 23, R. V.

To enter the intermediate state is to be with Christ, to be 'present with the Lord,'<sup>1</sup> dwelling with Him as in the same country or city. 'To be with Christ is life, and where Christ is there is His kingdom,' says S. Ambrose. It was this that made St. Paul desire to depart, and this is the hope which he sets before us too. When the Christian soul departs from this world he goes to Christ. He goes to his Maker, his Redeemer, his merciful Saviour; his Lord who has bought him, restored him, guided him, and now finally saves him. And he goes consciously. To be with Christ when we depart is to be with Him without any interposing medium. It is to know that we know Him, that we love Him, that He accepts us, and that we shall never lose Him. And he goes at once. 'Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ,' says the Apostle; as if the very moment of departure was also the moment of entering His presence, as if to depart and to be with Christ were actually the same thing. So it was with St. Stephen. He saw Christ when he was dying, and prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' So, when he had died, Christ, Whom he had seen, received his spirit. What a thought is this! The eyes closing now upon this present world of confusion and strife, and opening upon

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 8.



the holy calm of the unseen Church ; closing upon suffering and sorrow, and opening upon joy that shall not end ; closing on darkness and opening on light ; closing—closing for ever on all the powers of evil and the sense and presence of sin, and opening upon Him who is Himself Light and Life, Holiness and Love !

WILLIAM MATURIN.

One cry of mortal anguish,  
And then the Cross He leaves,  
While Paradise the blessed,  
The Conqueror receives ;  
That bright and tranquil region  
For Christ has waited long,  
And now He treads its portals,  
Head of a glorious throng.

Then welcomed Him, rejoicing  
The souls of all the just,  
Who, from the world's creation,  
Have died in hope and trust ;  
Then Eve's deep expectation  
Was satisfied indeed,  
And Abraham beheld Him,  
The long-desired Seed.

Since then a countless number,  
Soul rescued after soul,  
Have passed unceasing upward  
Unto the heavenly goal ;  
New forms of varied beauty,  
But all made like their Lord,  
The sweet and full-toned chorus  
Of that one primal chord.

All holy ties of kindred  
There blend and merge in one—  
The children of the Father,  
Accepted in the Son.

Earth's long processions ending,  
There form in circles vast,  
There meet the first and latest,  
Where time is overpast.

They are at one for ever,  
In love intensely keen,  
With memories cleansed, yet perfect,  
And joy where shame has been.  
Their prayer now knows no languor,  
Their praise unceasing flows,  
From rapture, that still higher  
And more abounding grows.

Their language is too mighty  
To be translated now ;  
The Great Apostle heard it,  
Yet could not make us know  
The glory of its meaning,  
The music of its tone ;  
But panted for the hour  
When it should be his own.

Panted for the ' far better,'  
The far, far better Land,  
The Presence of Christ Jesus,  
The joys at His Right Hand :  
For he had seen that region  
While yet in mortal guise,  
Guest in the many mansions,  
The homes of Paradise.

C. M. NOEL.

### With Christ.

OUR Lord tells us what it is that makes Paradise to be the place of blissful repose it is, viz. : That the faithful departed live there in the sunlight of His Presence. Not that the local presence of His Sacred Manhood is there. For Jesus' humanity

is not now in Paradise, not even His human spirit. On Easter Day it entered again into His Body, and in union with it, rose from Joseph's tomb. Then, forty days after, the God-Man, in verity of our nature with body, soul, and spirit, ascended into Heaven, and in that nature sat down on the right hand of God. So the dwelling-place of the Lord Jesus is Heaven, and the faithful will not 'see His face' or be in His dwelling-place until after His Second Coming.

But still it is true that to be 'absent from the body' is to be 'present with the Lord.' For Jesus makes Himself wondrously present to the dwellers in Paradise in the power of the Holy Ghost. True, the Sun of Righteousness is in Heaven, but He causes His light-giving, warming, fructifying beams to shine with wondrous powers on those who are in His garden. He is in heaven, yet ever does He draw near to His own with whispers of His voice and ministries of His hand as He reveals Himself to His own through the Spirit.

And, indeed, this Spiritual nearness meets every need of a disembodied spirit. It could not see Him with a material eye; it can only see Him with the eyes of the understanding. It can but be near Him with a spiritual contact—that is, with a contact of heart and mind and will. But so sensible is this nearness that it is indeed a presence; so clear this grasp of Jesus that it is, indeed, a vision. For in them knowledge is so wondrous a sight that the faithful in Paradise see Jesus with their whole being.

And wondrous is the power of this spiritual vision of Jesus through the Holy Ghost. It is an illuminating vision. In the Word made flesh the mind of God is mirrored in a created nature. Jesus is the Truth, because He is the Incarnate Word of God. Gazing on His Sacred Person, we learn the truth, that is, the thoughts of God for His creatures, and His Being in Himself. Here, however, we cannot see Him as He is, even with the eyes of our understanding. Hence, our knowledge here is partial; so much so that growth in knowledge is but an increasing sense of ignorance. But there, as Jesus reveals Himself to the intellect in the power of the illuminating

Spirit, partial knowledge becomes perfect. And in this knowledge is the ceasing from intellectual conflict and the passing into not mental inactivity, but mental rest.

It is a conforming vision. Even here, to gaze on Jesus is to become like Jesus. 'Beholding, as in a glass,' in His sacred manhood, 'the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'<sup>1</sup> Here our conformity is partial, because our vision is limited. But there, where we see Him clearly, we shall be conformed in spirit to His image, with an ever-increasing conformity 'unto the perfect day.'

Yes, our loved ones, who in Paradise gaze on Jesus Christ, are transfigured as they reflect His beauty, are transformed as they become more and more assimilated to Him on Whose fair form they for ever gaze, and with the love of Whom their hearts beat high.

It is a purifying vision. Here, where our consciences are seared and our sensibilities blunted; here, where our knowledge is so partial and our love so limited, the purification of the soul is never complete—its scars are never wholly removed or its blemishes wholly obliterated. Only perfect contrition can work out a perfect purification. But they who in Paradise gaze on the Lamb as It had been slain are perfectly contrite. In His light they see light; in the fulness of His love they love fully. By His grace the inner sensibilities of our nature are developed in them, and their consciences fully re-echo the condemnation of God on sin. And in that light they read in its true colours the story of their past and sorrow over it with the sorrow of deepest love. This sorrow is the sorrow of peace. Even here, in some degree, we learn this lesson, that it is they who mourn who in mourning are comforted. Who can tell, save they who know, the peace of true sorrow for sin? Who can tell, save they who know it, the deepening peace of deepening contrition? sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. The measure of the sorrow is the measure of the joy. And so it is in Paradise. Theirs is the perfect peace of a perfect contrition

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.



issuing in an ever-increasing purification, for there, indeed, 'The path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'

He who thus reveals Paradise can bring us to it. For all, for each, He has merited an entrance there through His precious Blood. He has conquered the foe that bars man's entrance. He has won the forgiveness which they need who would pass into that land of rest. He pleads for ever before the Father His redeeming Passion, and by this pleading gives it an ever-present power. And to every trembling penitent who looks to Him in faith He says, 'Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.' Dare to take home this word to thy soul. It will cheer thee in life's journey ; it will be a strong refuge in the hour of death. For in that hour this is the one stay of the soul—the knowledge that Paradise is opened to penitent sinners by Jesus Christ.

G. BODY, '*The Revelation of Paradise.*'—*A Sermon.*

The strange isolation of the dead from all external intercourse with other persons and things does not really make them solitary. It leads them to a far more profound communion with each other and with us. In this life we only guess at the meaning of the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. They know it by a direct experience. Here we conjecture one another's meaning through signs and words and looks, and often misinterpret them. There they read clearly, seeing the truth of things in Christ. The outward events of this world's history do not affect them ; but the spiritual bearings of those events no doubt affect them deeply.

This is involved in their relations with Christ, the closeness of which is brought out in every passage of Scripture which deals with the subject at all. When the believer dies, 'he goes to rest through Jesus,'<sup>1</sup> because it is Jesus that prepares his place of repose and conducts him to it. He 'dies in the Lord,'<sup>2</sup> because death does not carry him outside of that sacred

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv. 13.

union in which he has lived. His parting cry is, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,'<sup>1</sup> because, however great the submission to Christ has been before, the spirit now springs absolutely into His keeping, to have no independent life of its own. Yet it is not lost in Him. It departs to 'be with Christ,'<sup>2</sup> as still a separate personality, capable of enjoying the privilege of being in the same place where He is. And He promises that it shall 'be with' Him in more than a local sense in Paradise; it shall have a sense of companionship with Him, and of sharing His fortunes. Nor does the spirit of the believer feel that its sojourn there in His company is either precarious or unobserved. He is 'at home with the Lord,'<sup>3</sup> in reciprocal intercourse with Him, in mansions which are His true and native abode, because they are Christ's to begin with. When his stay in that particular 'mansion' of the Father's house is ended, 'God will bring' him, still 'with Jesus,' to that complete state in which body and spirit together will have the fruition of eternal fellowship with Christ.

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

### Collect.

O Father of mercies, Who hast foreordained Thine elect to be conformed to the image of Thy Son; so conform us, we beseech Thee, unto Him in holiness, that when He shall appear we may be made like unto Him in glory. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

*The Priest's Prayer-Book.*

'Tis heart on heart Thou rulest. Thou art the same  
At God's right hand as here exposed to shame,  
And therefore workest now as Thou didst then—  
Feeding the faint divine in humble men.  
Through all Thy realms from Thee goes out heart-power,  
Working the holy, satisfying hour,  
When all shall love, and all be loved again.

G. MACDONALD.

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. i. 23.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. v. 8.

## CHAPTER IX.

### Service—Spiritual Activity.

*Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by Which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.—1 St. Peter iii. 18, 19.*

IN the spirit, that is (according to the undoubted interpretation of the words)<sup>1</sup> in His human spirit, 'He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.'

As in the flesh He had preached to men in the flesh, so in the spirit He preached to men in the spirit. Have we not here a kind of pattern or first-fruits of the quickened energy of the departed spirit? If in His Life in the flesh, our Blessed Lord is our Pattern here on earth, if in His Resurrection He is 'the First-fruits of them that sleep,' is He not also, in the intermediate state, the Type of our redeemed humanity—of its condition and its energies in that state?

This thought bears upon the condition of those who depart hence in the ripeness of faith and love. This quickening of the spirit involves a development of spiritual power, we know not now how great, in the unseen world: an increase of illumination, of knowledge, of progress, of purification, when the soul is set free from the bonds and fetters of the flesh. As our Blessed Lord, having triumphed over death, proclaimed His triumph to the souls of the waiting and faithful dead, Himself no longer hindered and humbled by the powers of this present evil world, so do His redeemed, when the last struggle of death

<sup>1</sup> See *Speaker's Commentary*, in loc.; also *The Spirits in Prison*, Dean Plumptre.

is over and their spirits are set free, move on, in the track of His own victory, to new spiritual visions and higher spiritual experiences even as He leads. 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.'<sup>1</sup> The wants and the burdens of this visible scene are removed for ever. And a new and divine nourishment is provided, and new sources of Refreshment and of Life are opened out to their enlarged spiritual capacity. 'For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water.'<sup>2</sup> Yea, in the words of the Psalmist, 'They will go from strength to strength; and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Zion.'<sup>3</sup>

What is the source of this increase of vitality in the human spirit when it has departed hence? It is to be traced, I think, in the freer and fuller operation of the Holy Ghost in that spiritual sphere.

We are apt, almost unconsciously, to confine our thoughts of the Holy Spirit's working to the earthly stage of our existence. We are so bound about by the things of time and sense, that we fail to realise the continuity and the extension of His operation in the invisible world.

And yet our Blessed Lord's promise is, that the Holy Ghost shall abide with His Church for ever. Not with one part of His Church only, or for one period of its existence only, not merely with the Church visible on this short and transitory scene of time—but with his whole Mystical Body, even to the end. . . . For the human spirit surely is the special sphere of the working of the Spirit of God—His own secret dwelling-place, His congenial home. 'He dwelleth with you, and *shall be in you*.'<sup>4</sup> And when that spirit is disentangled from the flesh, may we not say that it passes more entirely into the Holy Spirit's keeping, to be guided, and illuminated, and purified 'more and more unto the perfect day'?

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

<sup>4</sup> St. John xiv. 17.



Let us follow up this thought yet a little further. As we look forward, with the waiting spirit, to the final glory of the Resurrection and the Spiritual Body, we seem to discern, as it were in dim outline, the development and the issue of the Spirit's working in the world beyond the grave.

He Who by His Spirit raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, shall raise up, by the same Spirit, all those that are His.<sup>1</sup> The Holy Ghost is the true Quickener of the Spiritual Body, in which we shall stand, at the Resurrection, in the very likeness of Christ before the Eternal Throne.

He by Whose operation, in the Blessed Eucharist, the germ of the Spiritual Body is implanted even here on earth, will not fail to fulfil His own especial work; yea, rather will develop and perfect it, in the purer atmosphere of that spiritual world, until, in the language of the Apostle, 'The body of our humiliation is fashioned like unto the glorious Body of our Lord.'<sup>2</sup>

We are to be transformed into the likeness of the Son of Man. This is the very condition of the Beatific Vision: 'We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'<sup>3</sup> And this transformation, as St. Paul implies, is the continuous and progressive work of the Holy Ghost. For he writes: 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'<sup>4</sup>

How beautiful, in this light, how clear and luminous is that vision of the Revelations, in which the Lamb is represented as leading the souls of the blessed 'unto living fountains of waters'!<sup>5</sup> The 'living waters,'—that symbol, so constant throughout Scripture, of the influences of the Holy Spirit, of His quickening and reviving and transforming energy,—are pictured to us, in the vision, as the unfailing refreshment of the faithful in Paradise; yea, as the very goal towards which, in its onward path, the human spirit is led under its Redeemer's hand. 'He shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.' The same image, the same symbol is transferred to the spiritual world.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. vii. 17.

Still, we may believe, our Lord speaks to us, by these living fountains, 'of the Spirit which they that believe on Him shall receive.'

Only, the flow of the Divine influences is then unhindered. The stream is pure and clear and unsullied ; free for ever from the perturbations of this evil world. 'And He showed me a pure river of Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb.'<sup>1</sup> . . .

Our Blessed Lord, as we read, 'went and preached unto the spirits in prison.' He had preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, while here in the flesh, to men in the flesh, and then He passed on to preach, in the spirit, that same Gospel to men in the spirit—to carry onward, into the spiritual world, that very work which the Father had given Him to do.

How significant is this fact ! It suggests to us a thought—a most comforting thought—that the human spirit, following the footsteps of the Master, is permitted to carry on still, and to perfect, in that higher sphere, the special work which was given to it to do here on earth—those very ministries of love which drew forth its characteristic graces during the course of its earthly life.

It has entered now upon a larger field for the exercise of its special gifts. Hence those are not lost to the Church who have been taken from us, nor is their special work—their own contribution, so to speak, to the fulness of the Church's life—come to an end.

As we mourn the departure from among us of noble spirits—of the powerful and the wise and the saintly—of those who have been, by rare energy or a large-hearted wisdom, the builders up and the strengtheners of the spiritual Zion, great men in Israel, let us reflect for our consolation, not only that they help us still, but that they are, as we trust, carrying on, with larger opportunities, the very work of their life here, and exercising, for the glory of their Lord and to the benefit of His Church, on a grander stage, those very gifts which distinguished them while with us in the flesh.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii. 1.

Surely in this sense, also, 'their works do follow them.' And from within the veil their voices seem still to echo back, for our assurance who remain behind, the words of the Psalmist: 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

As we dwell upon the memories of dear ones no more in the flesh, whose loving words were once our stay, and the graces of whose character were wont to shed a light and a gladness over our own life, let it be a sure recompense for our seeming loss to know that they are fulfilling still, in other worlds, their own characteristic ministry of love. The very virtues and graces on which we loved to dwell in this imperfect life, are ripening in the garden of the Lord, to bear their perfect fruit in the fulness of the glory of the Resurrection Day. 'Such as are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the Courts of the House of our God.'<sup>2</sup>

J. P. F. DAVIDSON, '*The Activities of the Spiritual World.*'—*A Sermon.*

In truth, rest is found, not in idleness, not in inactivity, but in service and ministry. The works that 'follow' are not discontinued; but what used formerly to be done with difficulty and fatigue is now done without effort or hindrance.

As, with God, rest is interrupted, and toil also. It would seem to be always and everywhere true, in the spiritual order, that rest is toil and toil is rest. Rest does not suspend toil and toil does not disturb rest; for is not this the life of God Himself? 'My Father worketh hitherto and I work.' All the children must enter experimentally into the meaning of those words. There in that place of blissful waiting and shelter and refreshment none can rest without working and none work without rest.

A. GURNEY, '*The Faithful Departed.*'—*A Sermon.*

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxviii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xcii. 12.

## Spiritual Influence.

*His servants shall serve Him.*—Rev. xxii. 3.

HAVE disembodied spirits in their blessed rest no graces to impart to such as lack? May there not be some there who are but learning in the school of Christ, whose store of grace is the scantiest, to whom the more richly gifted may impart from their treasures? Can there well be a limit to the application of this thought? Why should not spirits in bliss—in their initiatory bliss—interchange their graces just as much as ever they did on earth, giving and receiving as God has blessed them? And remember that this is just the very work for which their present nature fits them. It is not a matter of talking by uttered words—of exhorting, or warning, or instructing—but of direct communication from spirit to spirit, in the same way that the Holy Ghost gives of His fulness to us.

I see no reason why we should conceive of the rest of the departed as being uniform—pitched in the same key, if I may so speak—but much reason for believing the reverse to be the truth. The very thought of progress implies diversity. All do not start from the same point on the way of their ultimate and perfect sanctification. The separation of soul and body involves no thought of reduction to a common level of what is thus sundered. The rest of Paradise may still be satisfying, although the measure allotted to each is various. If there will be varying degrees of final bliss, so, is it reasonable to believe, are there of the intermediate rest. Each several soul, redeemed by the Blood of Christ, and admitted into the place of rest which Christ hallowed by His own personal Presence, matures there through the unceasing co-operation of the Holy Ghost, those graces which, in different measures and under varying conditions of inward existence, more or less hindered by its own intrinsic weakness, it shall have borne hence thither. It is this inequality which furnishes the basis for ministration. Because one spirit has its five talents in Paradise, another its



two, another but its one, therefore, as each has 'received the gift,' so may they still 'minister' it in their blessed rest, as they used to do amidst the strifes and hindrances of earth. . . .

When our dear ones go hence, and we mourn their loss, and sigh with regret over the absence of the blessings which they can no longer dispense, it would be as faithless as untrue to think that their influence is *gone*. It is *changed*, not *gone*. They are resting from their labours, but their works follow with them. They are not asleep, unconscious, heedless of what once interested them so deeply. The manner in which they exercise their influence is very different, yet we have no right to say that it is less effectual. We cannot tell what their prayers may not still be doing, both for themselves and us; nor how their labours in the rest of Paradise may be hastening on Christ's coming. And if the blessed dead, such as we have been led to regard them in their present life, exert a power upon the onward course of humanity which, however encompassed with mystery, we believe to be most real, what are we to say of its influence upon ourselves, as units among the crowd—especially upon such of us as can count amongst those departed ones some whose earthly life was so intertwined with ours, that only by tearing asunder the very fibres of our being has that separation been possible? Surely the Christian truth of a Communion of Saints, as indicating the close fellowship between the living and the dead, lifts us up wonderfully above the thralldom of this world's ways, and sets us in heavenly places, and in a purer, holier environment. *They*, not things of earth, fix the level of the life which lies before us. The Christian's life now is hid with Christ in God, and *with them*. Their love as well as that of Christ, 'constrains us'—their love to us, our love to them. They beckon us onward to where they are gone before, not by unreal phantasms, nor merely by precious memories; but yet by the 'cords of a man, the bands of love'<sup>1</sup>; by spiritual influence; by the force of their growing holiness and their consequent power with the Great Intercessor; by the strength of that impalpable, but

<sup>1</sup> Hosea xi. 4.

most effectual, unity, whereby all are 'knit together in one communion and fellowship'—all pressing forward together to the same blessed consummation—one in faith, in love and hope.

R. G. SWAYNE, *The Blessed Dead in Paradise*.

### Prayer.

O Lord God, grant to each and all of us, to be so true to our high calling here on earth, that when we, each in his appointed time, shall be summoned to join the great company of departed souls, we may pass hence in peace and without fear, looking humbly for that fuller light which shall break upon us, when the morning is come upon the unseen shore. Grant this, O Lord, for His sake Who is our Life, and in whose Presence is the fulness of Joy, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Adapted.*

### Collect.

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified ; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee ; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Collect for Good Friday.*

## CHAPTER X.

### Worship in Paradise.

*Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great.*—Rev. xix. 5.

It is a great help, in trying to contemplate God, to think of those whom we love in Paradise, as doing more heartily and perfectly what we, on earth, are only imperfectly trying to do.

1. By contemplating God the Saints in light gain power to *worship*. 'The Lord God and the Lamb are the Temple thereof.' All that is around them excites them to worship.

2. They gain power to *work*. 'His Servants shall serve Him.' Their life is twofold, like that of the Angels their 'fellow-servants,' of whom we read that they 'worship Him, and that they are sent 'forth to minister.' To look at Him is to gain strength for action.

3. They gain *Penitence* as they look on Him. . . . If we know the Love of God, we cannot look back upon even a wasted hour without sorrow, even here. And those blessed Saints gain a deeper penitence by the fuller revelation of His unutterable Love. They see His Face ; they look upon Him Whom they pierced ; and they see their past sins and negligencies and ignorances so as they never saw them before. 'Against *Thee* have I sinned.' Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood.

4. And then, from gazing upon God, there comes *assimilation*. They are 'like Him,' for they 'see Him as He is.'<sup>1</sup> This is now true of some who were struggling by our side, two or

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

three years ago, They are 'with Christ' now ; and they are 'like Him.'

The Saints in light do not contemplate God for the sake of winning this power for worship, and work, and penitence, and holiness. They contemplate God simply for the sake of knowing Him—of gazing into that Face of perfect Holiness and unutterable Love. This is their life : to see God ; to worship and adore Him, saying ' Holy, holy, holy.'

BISHOP WILKINSON, *The Communion of Saints.*

' O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord : praise Him and magnify Him for ever.'

*Benedicite.*

*I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands ; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures ; and they fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen : Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.—Rev. vii. 9-12, R.V.*

WHAT do they do, those blessed beings of whom the text speaks ? Whatever else they do, or do not do, this we are told they do—they worship. They satisfy, it would seem, in perfection, that mysterious instinct of devotion—that inborn craving to look upward and adore, which, let false philosophy say what it will, proves the most benighted idolater to be a man, and not a brute—a spirit, and not a merely natural being.

They have worshipped, and so are blest. They have hungered and thirsted after righteousness, and now they are filled. They have longed for, toiled for, it may be died for, the true, the beautiful, and the good ; and now they can gaze upward at the perfect reality of that which they saw on earth, only as in a glass darkly, dimly, and afar ; and can contemplate the utterly free, the utterly beautiful, and the utterly good in the character of God and the face of Jesus Christ. They



entered while on earth into the mystery and the glory of self-sacrifice ; and now they find their bliss in gazing on the one perfect and eternal Sacrifice, and rejoicing in the thought that it is the cause and ground of the whole universe, even the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

I say not that all things are clear to them. How can they be to any finite and created being ? They, and indeed angels and archangels, must walk for ever by faith, and not by sight. But if there be mysteries in the universe still hidden from them, they know who has opened the sealed book of God's secret counsels, even the Lamb who is the Lion, and the Lion who is the Lamb ; and therefore if all things are not clear to them, all things at least are bright, for they can trust that Lamb and His self-sacrifice. In Him and through Him, light will conquer darkness, Justice injustice, truth ignorance, order disorder, love hate ; till God be all in all, and pain and sorrow and evil shall have been exterminated out of a world for which Christ stooped to die. Therefore they worship ; and the very act of worship—understand it well—is that great reward in heaven which our Lord promised them. Adoration is their very bliss and life. It must be so. For what keener, what nobler enjoyment for rational and moral beings, than satisfaction with, and admiration of, a Being better than themselves ? Therefore they worship ; and their worship finds a natural vent in words most fit, though few, but all expressing utter trust and utter satisfaction in the worthiness of God. Therefore they worship ; and by worship enter into communion and harmony not only with each other, not only with angels and archangels, but with all the powers of nature, the four beings which are around the throne, and with every creature which is in heaven and in earth, and under the earth, and in the sea. For them, likewise, St. John heard saying, 'Blessing and glory, and honour, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'<sup>1</sup>

C. KINGSLEY.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 13.

*Ye are come unto Mount Sion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.—*  
 Heb. xii. 22-24.

THERE is, perhaps, no vision in Scripture more glorious than that which these three verses open out to us when we meditate upon them, combining, as they do, at one glance, so many other Scripture visions of the invisible world. The glorious sights, *e.g.*, revealed to Jacob at Bethel, to Elisha's servant at Dothan, to Micaiah in the prison, to St. Stephen before the Sanhedrim, to St. John in the Isle of Patmos, seem all crowded into the one vision which these verses bring before us.<sup>1</sup> As St. Paul in those words rolls back for us the curtain which hides from us the invisible world, a magnificent panorama bursts upon our view, which becomes more and more magnificent the longer we gaze upon it. It is, as it were, a vision of the vast Cathedral of the Temple made without hands, thronged with worshippers, which we are looking at ;—its outer courts the Church on earth ; its holy place, the gardens of Paradise ; its Holy of Holies, the city and palace where God's Throne is. We have here, in fact, the same vision of the worship of heaven which St. John gives us—though on a larger scale—in his Book of the Revelations. Both St. John there, and St. Paul here and elsewhere in this Epistle, give us pictorial visions of that perpetual celebration, that perpetual 'showing forth of Christ's death,' in which Earth, and Paradise, and Heaven are to join till His coming again. This great sight, which was brought before the mind of St. Paul as he wrote the words, is a vision of all saints ; worshippers in Earth, in Paradise, in Heaven are here seen combined in one Communion of Saints :—

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxviii. 10-17 ; 2 Kings vi. 17 ; 1 Kings xxii. 19 ; Acts vii. 55 Rev. iv., v., viii.

Celestial Priests and Seraph Kings  
In links of glory twine,  
And spirits of departed men  
In saintly lustre shine,  
With Angels dear that fold their wings  
Above the awful shrine.

It is a vision dimly apprehended by us when we think of the Jewish Temple, with its outer Courts, its Holy Place, its Holy of Holies, as they appeared on the great day of Atonement, when 'the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense,' or when we think of a vast cathedral, with its choir, nave and transepts, filled with worshippers at a celebration now.

And all this brings before us the practical nearness to us of departed saints who are dear to us, though out of sight; and gives us a glimpse of one of their blessed employments. When we come to the throne of grace at the Holy Eucharist (that throne of grace which is above, and yet also below), we come 'to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of just men made perfect,' worshipping there: there is, as it were, no gulf now between us and them which would prevent them from passing to us, or us from passing to them: they are, as it were, but in another part of the same Temple: we in the nave, they in the chancel. The worship before the Throne never ceases; and we enter the same place of worship with those above at every Holy Communion. The angels certainly, and the departed saints probably, join consciously with us in the same Eucharistic worship; for angels present our prayers to God, and the saints join their prayers with ours then.<sup>1</sup> Thus the departure of one beloved saint after another from among us, is but the filling up of the space assigned to the worshippers in that part of the Temple above which we call 'Paradise,' or the outer part of the heavenly sanctuary. As the years go by, one beloved friend in Christ after another leaves the worshippers in the courts below, and joins those worshipping nearer God's

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii. 3, 4; Tobit xii. 12, 15.

presence above. The scene brought before St. Paul's mind is still being enacted; but the Temple above is fast filling; and this can only continue till the heavenly Celebration, which St. Paul and St. John saw going on, shall be over, and the angelic servants of the King shall no more bring back to Him the message, 'yet there is room'; when the vision of the holy dead filling up their places as worshippers in Paradise, which is set before us in this Epistle, shall give place to that other vision which every eye shall see; when 'the trumpet shall sound' in token that the Liturgical service of Heaven, described here, is over; when the great Procession shall form; when the last prayer of intercession at the Golden Altar shall have been offered, the last angelic anthem over a penitent sinner shall have been sung, when the last name to be written in the Book of Life shall have been entered; when 'the Lord, my God, shall come, and all the saints with Thee.'<sup>1</sup>

J. C. BELLETT, *The Dead in Christ.*

Lord Jesu, Whom by power Divine  
Now hidden neath the outward sign,  
We worship and adore,  
Grant when the veil away is roll'd,  
With open face we may behold  
Thyself for evermore.

*Ancient and Modern, 314.*

### Prayer.

O God, holy and humble men of heart, spirits and souls of the righteous, all citizens of the Jerusalem above, and all orders of blessed spirits, in suppliant adoration, evermore hymn forth with one consent Thy glory and honour. O Lord, those inhabitants on high, with fit tribute of exaltation and majesty, praise Thee. Man, a portion of Thy creation, praiseth Thee; and I, too, though a sinner, desire with great longing to praise Thee, and would fain love Thee with exceeding love. O God, my life and my strength, deem me worthy to praise Thee.

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv. 5.



Grant, O Lord, so long as I abide in this frail body, that my heart may praise Thee, that my tongue may praise Thee; and that from my inmost being I may cry out, 'O Lord, who is like unto Thee?' Thou art the Almighty God Whom we worship and adore, Three in person, One in substance of Godhead, Who madest us out of nothing by Thy power, and when lost by our own fault didst redeem us marvellously by Thy love and goodness. Suffer me not, I beseech Thee, to be ungrateful for so great benefits. I beseech Thee, increase my faith, brighten my hope, enlarge my charity. Of Thy own special grace make me to be ever strong in faith and active in duty, so that, by a right belief and works agreeing thereto, I may by Thy mercy attain unto eternal life, and there, beholding Thy glory face to face, ever adore Thee, saying, 'Glory be to the Father our Creator; glory be to the Son our Redeemer; glory be to the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier; glory to the highest and undivided Trinity, working inseparably, Whose everlasting kingdom endureth throughout all ages.' Amen.

S. AUGUSTINE.

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Mutual Ministry of Prayer.

*Remember thy children that sleep, for I shall bring them out of the sides of the earth, and shew mercy unto them : for I am merciful, saith the Lord Almighty. —2 Esdras ii. 31.*

WE are all brethren, and by the bonds of human sympathy and the ties of Christian brotherhood are bound to help one another by prayer. And if the whole body of Christians, both those in the flesh and those out of the flesh, are but one family, then it seems hard to believe that separation by death can interpose a barrier to our intercessions.

H. M. LUCKOCK, *After Death.*

There are who love, upon their knees,  
To linger when their prayers are said,  
And lengthen out their Litanies,  
In duteous care for quick and dead.  
Thou, of all Love the Source and Guide !  
O may some hovering thought of theirs,  
Where I am kneeling, gently glide,  
And higher waft these earth-bound prayers.

*Lyrà Innocentium.*

One witness, at least, to the truth of wider, happier thoughts as to the state of the dead than have recently prevailed among us, was borne, with no faltering voice, in no indistinct accents, by the Church of the first ages. In every form, from the solemn liturgies which embodied the belief of her profoundest

thinkers and truest worshippers, to the simple words of hope and love which were traced over the graves of the poor, her voice went up, without a doubt or misgiving, in prayers for the souls of the departed. Those prayers were, indeed, part of the inheritance which she received from an older system. For more than two centuries before the Conqueror of Hades was revealed, they had entered into the worship of all true Israelites, had been part of the services of Temple and Synagogue.<sup>1</sup> They passed, to say the least, unblamed by Him who laid His finger with such unsparing severity on the corrupt traditions of Pharisaism ; by the Apostle, who had no words too sharp for the weak and beggarly elements which he had left behind when Christ was revealed to him. We have good grounds for believing that they mingled with the thankfulness and hope with which St. Paul thought of the souls that had gone before.

E. H. PLUMPTRE, *The Spirits in Prison*.

God is a Father, and would have us tell Him everything we feel. If there is any desire in our minds which we dare not bring to Him, we ought not to retain it at all. Everything that we may legitimately wish for, we may reverently ask. We may not ask for things which God makes it plain that He does not will—such as the return of the dead to this corruptible life, or communications with them in superstitious and forbidden ways. Nor ought we to make definite petitions based on uncertain knowledge of the facts, or at least we must make them with great reserve. But it is safe, with St. Paul, to ask for the departed, ‘mercy in that day,’<sup>2</sup> or, with the Psalmist, that they and their afflictions may be ‘remembered.’<sup>3</sup> Rest, peace, refreshment ; light perpetual ; the favour of the Divine regard ; a portion with the Saints ; a joyful resurrection and a merciful judgment—these are the kinds of requests which ancient piety was accustomed to make for them. Nor can it be unavailing and superfluous to offer such prayers.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Macc. xii. 44, 45.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. i. 16-18.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm cxxxii. 1.

The dead do not need the succour of the prayers of the living in the same way as those do who are liable to temptation and whose salvation is not yet assured. But our prayers are of use to them in their progress. To omit the mention of them in the devotions of the Christian Church on earth would imply that all connection between them and us had ceased. Nothing could be more untrue.

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

Scripture gives us no countenance in neglecting such a duty as prayer for the dead. On nothing is it more strong and constant and emphatic as on the duty of prayer at all times, everywhere, at stated seasons, and in the midst of daily life, 'for all men,'<sup>1</sup> and especially for those bound to us in the providential relationships of life. *Never* does Scripture draw the line and forbid the voice of prayer to breathe across the grave. *Never* does it teach that death is the limit of preparation and purification, but always places that limit at 'the day of Jesus Christ.'<sup>2</sup>

In the Jewish Church, prayer for the dead was undoubtedly used. It was used in that Church in the time of our Lord and His Apostles, and had the practice been other than according to the mind of God, our Blessed Master, Who did not fail to denounce whatever in the Church of His time was hollow and evil, would certainly not have failed to forbid it.

And the mind of God as to this point is brought out to us in the teachings of the early Church, whose teaching is most conclusive. . . .

The ancient 'Liturgies,' as they are called, are what we should call the order of Service for the Holy Communion. In them there are unmistakable prayers for the dead. The custom of so praying is immemorial. As far back as anything is known of the history of the Church, so far back do we find that before the throne of grace, and especially in the celebration of the great Sacrifice of the Altar, the dead were not forgotten. . . .

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v. 23; 1 Cor. i. 8.



If by grace, we would realise more the unity of the Body of Christ, then, while 'militant here on earth,' we should not so readily forget the 'Church at rest.'

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *Sunlight and Shadow in the Christian Life*.

Unless there were, in the Word of God, an absolute prohibition of prayer for the departed, how could we go on praying for those whom we love until they were out of sight, and then cease on the instant, as if 'out of sight, out of mind,' were a Christian duty? How should we not rather follow the soul to the Eternal Throne, with the Apostle's prayer (as seems probable, for the *departed* Onesiphorus), 'the Lord grant that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day'?<sup>1</sup> But we have no doubt that we *may* pray. For the whole Church so prayed, much nearer to the time when the beloved disciple left this earth, than many of us are to the early memories of our fathers. . . . And the departed are, but indistinctly, yet *are* included in our Eucharistic Prayer, 'by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and *all Thy whole Church* may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of His Passion.'

What an unspeakable privilege it is so to pray! It is so cold a thought that we have for the time no more to do with those who loved us here, and whom we loved, that it must needs, on that ground alone, be false, because it is so contrary to love. And yet much more, since the Church has always prayed for the departed from the very first. It belongs to the Communion of Saints that they, in the attainment of certain salvation, and incapable of a thought other than according to the mind of God, and filled with His Love, shall pray and long for us, who are still on the stormy sea of this world, our salvation still unsecured; and that we, on our side, should pray for such things as God in His goodness wills to bestow upon them. But what things? It would not matter to us if we knew not 'what things.' We might leave them safely in

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 18.

God's Hand, committing it to Him to do for them more than we can ask or think. And yet one of the earliest thoughts of the intermediate state was that it was a preparation to 'contain God.' Think we what God is, absolutely holy, undefiled, 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,'<sup>1</sup> into Whose Presence nothing that defileth can enter, 'a Consuming Fire,' which must consume all rust and dross which could cleave to the soul. A soul, which has any spot of sin, could not endure itself in the brightness of that Almighty Presence. . . .

And we part hence, with our old habits ingrained in us. . . . What are we that we are all at once to behold God, for Whom we have, most of us, so little longed? True! God might, in an instant, if it seemed good to Him, cleanse the soul in the twinkling of an eye. But who has told us that He will? . . . The soul, in the particular judgment, has seen itself unveiled in the light of truth. Every excuse which it ever made for itself has fallen off. It has seen in the Face of Jesus what one the slightest sin would be. It would mar heaven! And then, its own! Sustained by its Judge, it has beheld them all—the poorness of its penitences, the nothing of its self-revenges,<sup>2</sup> the little genuine sorrow for the love of God, that it has displeased Him, and so it shrank back, feeling itself unworthy to approach Him. . . .

. . . Then, too, how poor our longing for God! How poor our desire to be for ever free from sin. We are content with the weary round of this life, not only that we may (if, indeed, we can) obtain more glory to God, at least by our prayers for our fellow-sinners. We are content with it not only because we do not feel ourselves as yet fit to behold God, not because we wish to have some more victories, to become more Deiform, but because we are inured to life. We do not mostly long to see God; and so, when the time comes, it is not fitting for us to be admitted at once to that Beatific Vision which we have here so little longed to behold.

But whatever the past has been, whatever the hindrance

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 13; Rev. xxi. 27; Deut. iv. 24; Heb. xii. 29.

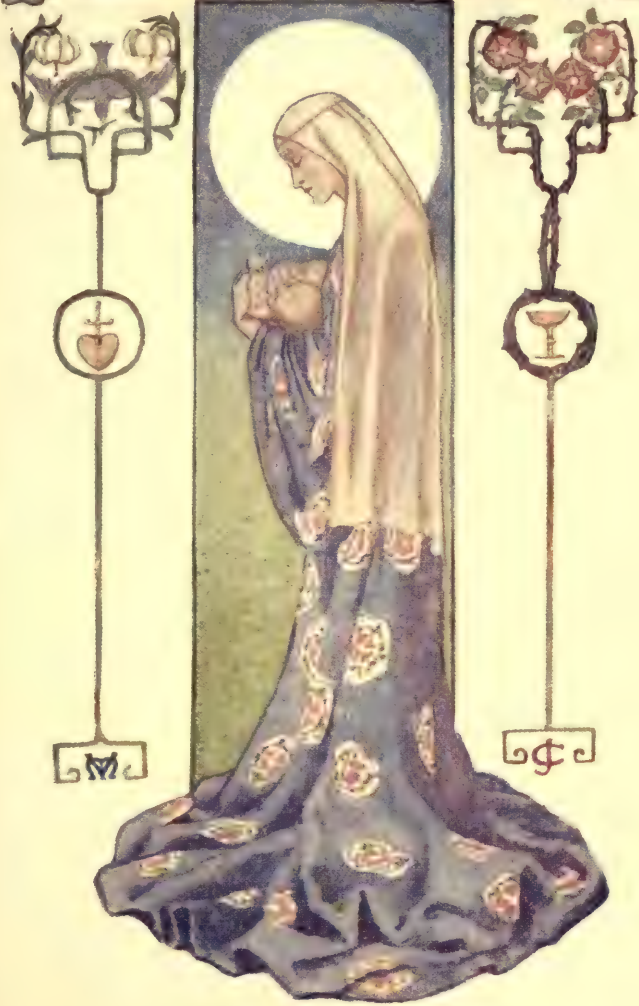
<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 11.

may be, those souls can do nothing to undo it. The time of probation is over ; and, where there is no peril of forfeiting grace, there is no opportunity of gaining by grace. The disembodied soul can do no act to please God, whereby it may abridge its exile from God. It has but to wait in silence. O how it must long that it had not so sinned, or that it had repented more zealously of its sins. And how purifying that burning longing for God must be, that inextinguishable thirst, and yet that meek patience ! We cannot, in this flesh, in which we have so little longed for God, imagine what that strong impulse must be, with which the soul is borne towards God ; what that suffering of temporary 'loss' must be, when all distractions of this world are removed, when it has only one fixed motionless thought, 'When shall I be admitted to behold God ? When shall I be admitted to praise and adore Him face to face ? When shall I again see Jesus, not as my Judge any more, but to thank Him and bless Him for all His love for me, that He had redeemed me ?' . . . What must it be to long again to behold Jesus, with all that longing which the sight of His forgiving love must have inspired, and yet to have it for a while delayed ? The soul has seen Jesus, it knows what it is to see Jesus, and it sees Him no more. It is not as with those whom He left here in the flesh. They gained unimaginably by their loss. The love of the beloved Disciple, the love of His Virgin-Mother, their conformity to the will of God, must have been so intensified during those thirty or seventy years of absence. *There*, there is nothing to gain, because there is nothing which could be lost. In silence they wait for their perfected redemption. . . .

And yet, towards Him Whom now it feels to be the one end of its being the soul is borne ; for Him it pines ; it feels itself separate from Him, not, as even here, because God has some work for us on earth to do, some grace to gain, not by time, but by its unfitness. It longs to divest itself of *that*, whatever it be, which keeps it away from God. . . . And yet its longing is undistracted. Here, in the deepest sorrow, which does not dethrone reason itself, there is duty to be done,

BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

HAMEL LISTER







and joy in fulfilled duty, and variations of day and night, and distractions of the body and its needs; *there* it is one fixed gaze towards Him, the sole End of its being, its sole contentment. 'The eyes' of the soul 'fail with looking upward.'<sup>1</sup> What an unspeakable solace it were to be able to hasten that time!

We (so the Church has ever thought) may hasten it. The love of the departed avails for us, in gaining grace for us in this our perilous voyage, where there are so many shipwrecks, even, as it seems, within sight of the last haven of rest.

Our prayers avail for them to abridge the time of their waiting. So would God perpetuate Divine love beyond the grave; so would He, in the Communion of Saints, provide that 'they without us should not be made perfect,'<sup>2</sup> that they who have attained should be yet indebted to our love, while we are yet more indebted to their love. For they are in certain possession of the bliss of eternity, even though its fruition is for a time delayed; we are still tossed upon this boisterous sea, where so many around us are, alas! shipwrecked, and where He alone Whom they pray can bring us safe to shore.

Let us, then, fearlessly follow the triumph of those conquerors to whom God has given the victory over the devil, the world, and the flesh. The victory is complete. 'They rest from their labours and their works do follow them.'<sup>3</sup> If we could have the whole world and all its glories, would we not thankfully exchange it for their incapability of displeasing God by any the slightest emotion of their will? They are carrying on those prayers for sinners which they offered so fervently on earth. As the strife thickens on earth the number of the Church's intercessors increases in heaven. The portion of the Church in heaven is oh! how manifold more than the Church on earth! Yet we have an office of love too, for them, as many as are not yet perfected. Not in vain has

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xxxviii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xiv. 13.

the Church of old taught us to say, 'Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.'

E. B. PUSEY, *Addresses*.

### Prayers.

Give rest, O Sovereign Lord our God, to the souls of all those, who are in the tabernacle of Thy Saints in Thy Kingdom, graciously bestowing upon them the blessing of Thy promises, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, which Thou hast prepared, O God, for them that love Thy Holy name.

H. M. LUCKOCK, *Liturgy of St. Mark—from 'After Death.'*

O Lord, remember for good the whole mystical Body of Thy Son. Remember Thy servants who have gone before us with the sign of faith, and do now rest in the sleep of peace. . . . To these, O Lord, and to all that sleep in Christ, grant, we beseech Thee, the place of refreshment, light, and peace; through the same Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen. *Ambrosian Liturgy—from 'The Eucharistic Manual.'*

We commend unto Thy mercy, O Lord, all Thy servants and handmaids, our brethren and sisters in the blessed communion of Saints, which are departed hence from us, and now do rest in the sleep of peace. Grant unto them, we beseech Thee, Thy mercy and everlasting peace; and that at the day of the general Resurrection we, and all they which be of the Mystical Body of Thy Son, being perfectly conformed to his image, may be glorified together with Him; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever one God world without end. Amen.

*Communion Office of 1549, and Romans viii.*

## The Prayers of Saints.<sup>1</sup>

THE Church hath taught in general that the departed pray for us ; that they recommend to God the state of all their relatives in the union of the intercession that our Blessed Lord makes for us and them.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Again we ask in our restless eagerness, Do the souls of the righteous know what is passing on the earth ? Do they think of and pray for those they have left behind them ? Are the prayers of the invisible Church offered for the visible, of the triumphant or the expectant Church for that which is still militant ? Here also we dare not speculate overboldly. Memory of what has been does not necessarily involve the knowledge of what is, still less of that which shall be. It may be that there are things which the souls of the dead, though equal to, like unto the angels, still 'desire to look into';<sup>2</sup> that the events of this visible world, or of other regions of the invisible, lie beyond their ken. But this much may at least be said with but small chance of error : that, if they remember (and the consciousness of personal identity is, as we have seen, inseparable from memory), then, if we believe in the Communion of Saints, if the perfected Christian character does not lose that which was the crowning grace and excellence of the imperfect, they cannot but pray for those whom they have loved on earth ; for the whole Church militant in its temptations and its conflicts.

If they are in any sense with Christ, they must be one in spirit with Him Who is our advocate with the Father, and ever liveth to make intercession for us.<sup>3</sup> Of this, indeed, we have something like an assurance in the cry of 'How long, O Lord?' which went up from the souls beneath the altar in the apocalyptic vision.<sup>4</sup>

E. H. PLUMPTRE, *The Spirits in Prison*.

The saints in Paradise are ever interceding mightily with God for their struggling brethren on the earth. If they are

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii. 30 ; Luke xx. 36 ; 1 St. Peter i. 12.

<sup>3</sup> 1 St. John ii. 1 ; Heb. vii. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. vi. 10.



capable of speaking to God at all, or of holding in any way intercourse with Him—if the memory of the earth abides with them and the love of brethren beats in their hearts, it is impossible, when memory recalls life's struggles, and love makes them full of sympathy for their brethren, but that they should give expression to real sympathy to Him with Whom they have such intimate intercourse. Nor can we believe that the holy saints are absolutely ignorant of the Church's needs on earth. The fact that the ranks of the redeemed in Paradise are being constantly recruited from the Church on earth would make this improbable, if saint, indeed, holds intercourse with saint. That the saints have a knowledge, more or less extensive, of what passes in the Church on earth, is surely involved in the fact that 'we are come to the spirits of just men made perfect.'<sup>1</sup> That it is not a full knowledge of all that happens I quite believe: for such a knowledge were not, to my mind, consistent with their bliss. But be its limits what they may, it is knowledge wide enough to sustain their interest, and to win the great blessing of their prayers. Mingled with much incense, the prayers of the saints are offered by our Great High Priest upon the Golden Altar which is before the Throne.

G. BODY, '*The Present State of the Faithful Departed.*'—*A Sermon.*

We cannot now fully understand how, or how far, the dead in Christ know what passes on earth; whether it be that, as some suppose, they know by some direct means of intuition, or, as others think, by seeing what passes here being glassed in their vision of God—while yet whatever is thus seen must be tempered, so that what would trouble their peace must be hidden from their eyes—whatever would distract their loving gaze on God must be withheld, or there would not be really 'rest from their labours.' But to suppose that change of state would change their interests, change their fellow-feeling, change their desires towards their fellows still struggling on earth—this would seem inconceivable. And if it be so, then, in a world

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 23.

where worship and a sense of dependence on God must possess every soul to a degree of which we can form no adequate conception, we cannot doubt that their intercessions ever rise for us in constant prayer—tender, and true, and fervent—that they who know our needs, our weaknesses, by their own long experience of like trials, cannot but pray, however they may have failed on earth to pray for others.

T. T. CARTER, '*Sympathy with the Faithful Departed*.'—*A Sermon*.

The most ancient Liturgies all contain prayers that the worshippers at the Eucharist might be helped and benefited by the intercessions of the saints, or that they might, in union with us, present before God the Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.<sup>1</sup> . . . We may believe of the patron saints to whose memories our churches are dedicated, or by whom they were founded, and of our dear departed ones who still love us, what the collects and Offices of the old Sacramentaries teach us was believed of St. Paul and the other Apostles—that, as the Apostles are still interested in the Churches of their planting, so our departed friends are in their measure interested in us: that they know what we need, and that they ask that of God in prayer for us. . . . When, in the collect for Sexagesima, we pray that God 'by His power' would defend us against all adversity, we may do so with the intention of asking that God would succour us by any of those ministrations of saints in Paradise, or angels in Heaven, which He may see fit to employ. We know that His providence compasses us about every hour of our lives: by what means He exercises it, it is not needful for us to know. At any rate we learn from our subject the duty of not allowing ourselves ever to forget those dear to us who have departed this life in God's faith and fear: much less should we forget those to whom we owe so much, whom we commemorate on Saints' Days. We should think of the 'dead in Christ' as earnestly praying for those dear to them on earth: as offering prayers for us of far more

<sup>1</sup> See Hammond's *Lit. E. and W.*, p. 75; and Luckock's *After Death*, p. 172.

wisdom and efficacy than any which they offered when they were with us on earth, inasmuch as they are now nearer the throne: and they and their prayers are now purified from all worldly dross.

In one sense Christ is absolutely alone as our Mediator between God and man. No man on the Day of Atonement might enter that part of the Tabernacle or Temple where the high priest was alone with God in the thick darkness of the Holy of Holies.<sup>1</sup> But thousands and tens of thousands of prostrate worshippers surrounded him outside, 'praying without at the time of incense.' So while our Lord is pleading for us that Atoning Sacrifice, and those All-sufficient Merits, on which alone we rely for our salvation, countless myriads of saints are joining their prayers with His mediatorial intercession, if not actually presenting our prayers to Him; and this thought is not useless: while it adds fervour to our devotions, it helps us to 'look unto Jesus' with a more earnest gaze, and to join more earnestly in what was once their only plea, as it must still be ours:—

By Thy Cross and Passion,  
By Thy precious death and burial,  
By Thy glorious resurrection and ascension,  
In the hour of death  
And in the day of judgment,  
Good Lord, deliver us.

J. C. BELLETT, *The Dead in Christ.*

Made co-heirs with Christ in glory,  
His celestial bliss they share:  
May they now before Him bending  
Help us onward by their prayer;

That, this weary life completed,  
And its fleeting trials past,  
We may win eternal glory  
In our Father's home at last.

NEALE.

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xvi. 17.

## CHAPTER XII.

### Waiting for the Coming of Christ.

*It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His Salvation.—Isaiah xxv. 9.*

*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.—St. John xiv. 3.*

*Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. i. 7, 8.*

WHAT are the saints doing now? The Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, Confessors—nay, all who have been ‘called to be saints,’ and who have not forfeited their high calling; all who have departed in the faith of Christ; our own dear ones who have been withdrawn from our gaze behind the veil—what are they doing? They are all waiting, all expecting something—the revelation of Jesus Christ. Some, we believe, are, as regards their souls, perfected, and in the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision. They, we are sure, are actively engaged in working towards the great purpose of God, helping by their prayers to hasten the time when Christ’s kingdom shall fully come and the King be revealed in all His glory. Others, still imperfect, are being prepared for that Vision of God, in God’s hands being purified and cleansed from all stain of sin, and freed from every infirmity of soul; that they too may be ready against that Day, that they may be blameless in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Towards that end they are all looking; for that Day they are all in some way or other, passively or



actively, preparing. For they are all alive, all 'bound in the bundle of life with the Lord our God.'<sup>1</sup> Alive, that is, with the spiritual life, of which St. John says, 'God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.'<sup>2</sup> And life means work. As in the natural body work goes on as long as the body is alive, even in the profoundest sleep—and in some departments of the living organism the work seems to go on with greatest activity during sleep—so in the Body of Christ there is ceaseless activity. The Holy Spirit, the Divine principle of life, dwelling in the Incarnate Son of God and in all the members of His mystical Body, energises in each and in all.

J. W. HICKS, *A Sermon*.

Our 'elder brothers and sisters' in Paradise are waiting for the Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, of this there can be no doubt. . . .

We know by an instinct that all who have passed out of sight since Christ ascended into Heaven—the Saints and Martyrs, and Confessors, and those whom we ourselves have known and loved, must be longing for—desiring, with calm, steadfast expectation—the Manifestation of Jesus Christ. We are sure that they must desire it for the following reasons.

I. *They are not yet complete.* They have not yet attained to their 'perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul.' Therefore, even on the lowest and most selfish grounds, if there could be selfishness in Paradise, they must desire His Coming.

St. Paul said that 'to depart and to be with Christ' was 'far better'<sup>3</sup> than to remain on earth. But he also spoke of something better still, than 'to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.' He said, 'We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.'<sup>4</sup> In other words: We desire, not to put off

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i. 23.

<sup>2</sup> St. John v. 11.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

this mortal body, but rather to have it transformed—‘changed’ into a glorious Resurrection Body, at Christ’s appearing. We are willing to live here till Christ shall return; so that, instead of a transition state being necessary, we may be ‘changed,’ ‘in a moment,’ from the corruptible to the incorruptible; from this body of humiliation and weakness, to the body of glory: ‘clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.’<sup>1</sup>

II. *They must desire to meet us again.* We know how they loved us when they were on earth. We know how we loved them. We know what we were to each other. And, of course, they love us now! All their identity would be lost—we should be talking of mere dreamy abstractions, if we could conceive it possible that they were not *themselves*! And if they are still the same, they love us, and they desire to meet us again. Only, they desire it calmly; not with the feverish temperament of fallen humanity, but with the calm, purified, steadfast spirit of those who look into the Face of Jesus Christ, and are satisfied. For they are ‘delivered from the burden of the flesh,’ and from the burden of an uncertain to-morrow, as they restfully look up into that Face of Love unutterable.<sup>2</sup> . . .

III. But all this passes out of sight, in comparison with their *desire to see Jesus glorified*; to see His honour vindicated. Think how they must yearn to see Jesus Christ no longer ‘patronised’—no longer tossed aside by men, because He does not condescend to explain every mystery! Think how they must desire, with a pure and unselfish love, to see Christ no longer humbled, and His Bride no longer despised;—to see Him acknowledged as King of kings and Lord of lords;—to see the kings of the earth bringing their glory and honour into His Presence, and the mightiest conquerors among the sons of men casting down their crowns before His Throne!

Yes, there is no doubt about it, for those blessed ones are like Christ; and Christ often spoke of His Second Coming. They are filled with the Holy Ghost; and the Apostles, when filled with the Holy Ghost, wrote all those passages which we

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Cor. xv. 51-54.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

find in the Acts and the Epistles, about our Lord's Appearing ; opening out to us such wonderful teaching, right on to that glorious passage at the end of the Revelation : ' Surely, I come quickly.' ' Amen ! Even so come, Lord Jesus ! ' <sup>1</sup> . . .

The more we study our Bible, the more we shall see how all the inspired Apostles and Prophets and Teachers, and our Lord Himself, are ever lifting our eyes above death, above separation, above the grave, to that word of promise : ' Surely, I come quickly.' BISHOP WILKINSON, *The Communion of Saints*.

*He shall come to be glorified in His saints.*—2 Thess. i. 10.

THE joy of the departed is not perfected in actual fruition. Prayer is blended with their praise ; even in Paradise the Church is the Church expectant. They are waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their position is the same as ours, for to them as to us that coming is the end of all sorrows, the entrance of all joys. The Second Coming of Christ is that in which the whole Church is intensely interested, yet it is a truth which practically we too often forget. Yet is it in Paradise, as on earth, the true hope of the Church, the event on which her expectation must ever fasten.

When Christ comes He will come first to the redeemed in Paradise. It is not the Church on earth which shall first be caught up, but the Church of the faithful departed. ' We that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.' <sup>2</sup> Thus is the Church prepared for His coming with all her ordered ministries. To it Christ's elect shall be called out of His Church on earth, and out of those Christian Societies which are external to the visible unity of His Church. All who wait for His coming, having the seal of God in their

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 15.

foreheads, which is the witness of the Holy Ghost, shall be 'caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.' As one Church shall we be presented to Him. . . . It is for this presentation to Christ that the faithful in Paradise sigh.

This for a twofold reason. The perfecting of the spirit does not meet man's yearnings. God made man body and spirit, and the spirit separate from the body has a maimed existence. It is waiting, therefore, for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. It groans, earnestly desiring to be clothed with the heavenly body. This reunion of the perfected spirit with the incorruptible body depends on the coming of Christ. At His appearing the spirit shall return to its body, and shall stand in the perfection of its whole nature before Christ, and then in body as in spirit shall it know the power of Christ's Transfiguration, 'for when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'

Again, Paradise is not the home of the spirit, Heaven is its home. Where the Bridegroom is the Bride would be. Assured now of His Love, to whom she is espoused, the elect Church on earth and in Paradise waits for the coming of her Lord as the Bride for the Bridegroom. As she waits in joyful, restful eagerness she cries: 'Why is His chariot so long in coming; why tarry the wheels of His chariot?' But when He comes, His Church with joy shall enter into the Marriage Feast, and be for ever with her Lord in Heaven. Till then, in Paradise and on earth, she can but sit and wait for the morning.

G. BODY, '*The Present State of the Faithful Departed.*'—*A Sermon.*

'Father, Thy kingdom come!' Each morn doth bear  
To Heaven odorous incense of that prayer;  
Each eve the Church's faithful children lay  
That offering on her Altar—day by day  
Their voices mingling with the expectant song  
Of martyrs in their rest, that white-robed throng  
Who cry, 'O Lord most holy, Lord most true, how long?'

*Lyra Sanctorum.*



*Prayer.*

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast promised to come at a time when we look not for Thee, and at an hour when we are not aware, mercifully grant that we, following Thy precepts and example in this life, may at Thy coming be found among the number of Thy faithful ones, evermore to dwell with Thee, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

*From 'The Priest's Prayer-Book.'*

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Eucharistic Fellowship with the Departed.

*The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them.—*  
Rev. vii. 17.

It is not in definite human phrases, but by symbol and shadow only, that the realities of the Unseen Life are pictured to us. Yet this, I think, we may safely say—first, that such imagery shadows out some corresponding truth; and next, that the great idea or truth here conveyed to our minds is that of a *real Eucharistic fellowship* between our departed brethren and ourselves.

If our merciful Lord ‘prepares a table for us in the wilderness,’<sup>1</sup> He prepares one also within the Veil, furnished yet more amply with the ‘Angel’s Food.’<sup>2</sup> And round the Altar, alike on earth and in Paradise, rises the same unceasing chant of the Adorable Sacrifice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.’<sup>3</sup> Both here and there the Divine Food is the same; the Great Eucharist is the same; the All-sustaining Presence is the same; save only that *they* have passed into the inner courts of the Temple, while *we* tarry for a while without, and already from *their* spiritual eye the cloud of mystery is lifting, and they begin to see Him Whom they worship ‘even as He is.’<sup>4</sup>

Let us, then, dwell a little on this blessed Fellowship, for this surely is the great thought that possesses us—our unbroken union in this Holy Mystery with those who have passed within the veil. This is the great bond that binds us

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. v. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. v. 12.

<sup>4</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

in one, this Adorable Sacrifice, this Living Food, this Presence of the Lamb. 'The Bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ?'<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the medium of inter-communion between all the members of the whole Mystical Body, of the fellowship of all with Christ and with one another, bringing into mysterious contact the visible and the invisible. Yes, surely, 'that they all may be one' in the unity of the Divine Life: 'I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.'<sup>2</sup> To this Eucharistic Union, then, let us invite your attention for a little while.

And first: observe the Bond of the Passion.

For the Sacrifice, which we offer at the earthly altar, out-reaches, in its living efficacy, the limits of this militant state, and manifests its virtue in the spiritual world. Under the Shadow of the Cross, the spirits rest in Paradise, even as the troubled souls of men rest here on earth; only with a fuller, deeper, serener rest. The triumphs, the virtues, the healing and life-giving powers of the Passion are extended or prolonged into that unseen sphere of life: making partakers of its fruits, not only the faithful on earth, but also those within the veil.

. . . . .

'The white Robe' that is 'washed in the Blood of the Lamb,'<sup>3</sup> is spoken of distinctly as a gift or a grace of the State of Waiting. It is given to the 'Souls under the altar,'<sup>4</sup> in answer to their loud cry, not only as a token of the Divine favour, but as a communication of the purifying virtue of the Blood of the Lamb. For that 'fine linen, clean and white, is the righteousness of saints.'<sup>5</sup> And the Blood of the Lamb alone gives it its perfect whiteness. And they are bidden to wait till the great consummation, and not to weary or complain of their waiting. For that season should not be fruitless or unblessed. It should be the time for putting on the robe of righteousness, the raiment of the Purified; clothed with which

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>2</sup> St. John xvii. 22, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. vi. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xix. 8.

they should enter in to the 'marriage-supper of the Lamb,'<sup>1</sup> when the number of the Elect was full.

The song of the redeemed within the veil is a song of the Passion. This is especially noteworthy. It is not on earth alone that the Church commemorates the Sacrifice of the Lamb. 'The Lamb that was slain' is, even more especially, and more fully, the Object of the adoration of the Church at rest and of the Church triumphant. The song of the Passion is still heard; its echoes are still ringing in the courts of Paradise; and its sound will reach on, even to the Throne: till Angels as well as Saints, yea, and the whole redeemed Creation, take it up as the chorus of the everlasting hymn. 'Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, *and unto the Lamb* for ever and ever.'<sup>2</sup> And what does this prolonging of the song of the Passion signify? Not surely, not only, not chiefly, the record of a past redemption; but the living, enduring, ever-effectual virtues of the Blood of Christ.

We are not alone, then, when we gather round the altar. 'Our Fellowship, *our Communion* here is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ,'<sup>3</sup> and in Him, with all the members of His Body Mystical: our brethren within the veil as well as those on earth. 'And the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'<sup>4</sup> For the bond of the Passion unites us in one.

But to pass on to another bond of this Eucharistic union: the Bond of the Living Food. 'We being many,' writes St. Paul, 'are one Bread, and one Body': for we are all partakers of that 'One Bread.'<sup>5</sup> These words, spoken primarily of the Visible Church, cover, in their full extent, the area of the whole Church, invisible as well as visible. For from the Apostle's mind the Church within the veil is never absent. When he bows his knees in prayer, it is before Him 'of Whom

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. v. 13.

<sup>3</sup> 1 St. John i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> 1 St. John i. 7.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.



the *whole family* in heaven and earth is named.' <sup>1</sup> And the same idea pervades that saying of S. Ignatius to the Ephesians: 'Breaking one Bread, which is the medium of immortality, our antidote that we should not die, but *live for ever* in Jesus Christ.' The Living Food, the Bread of Life, is the common heritage, the perpetual sustenance of the whole Body Mystical, 'in heaven and in earth.' And from the very first, as you will recollect, our Blessed Lord associates this Living Bread with the Eternal Life, and points onward to its undying efficacy in the Eternal World: 'He that eateth of *this* Bread shall *live for ever*.' <sup>2</sup> It cannot indeed be otherwise. For spiritual food must be the nutriment of the spiritual nature. Yes: within the veil, and through the long reach of that intervening life, and on, even to the Resurrection-morning, this Eucharistic Food is the food of souls, assimilating the human nature more and more to the Divine, and fashioning it unto the likeness of 'the Glorious Body' <sup>3</sup> of the Lord. And thus our Lord's words, as you will remember,—when He speaks of this Spiritual Food of His most Precious Body and Blood,—include this great interval between Death and the Resurrection, and look on even to the Last Day, when the spiritual manhood shall be fully formed: 'Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life: *and I will raise him up at the Last Day*.' <sup>4</sup> 'For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them!' He, Who feeds us here on earth in this mystery of Communion, feeds them also. And we are *all* partakers of that One Living Bread. The bond of the Living Food unites us in one.

There is, no doubt, a great difficulty in the conception of this mystery, inevitable in the very partial knowledge we have of the conditions of life in the Intermediate State.

*How* this shall be we know not. What is the *process* of the mysterious change into the Divine 'Image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord,' <sup>5</sup> we can but faintly guess at. 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.' And the

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> St. John vi. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. iii. 20.

<sup>4</sup> St. John vii. 54.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18

difficulty is, no doubt, increased by the fact of the temporary separation of the two parts of our nature—the body and the spirit—in that State; making the human nature incomplete. Still, out from this cloud of mystery, there break forth glimpses here and there of what shall be; indications, too, not only of *the issue*, but, to a certain extent, of the *process* also. If, as St. Paul tells us, the ‘natural body’ is to be developed into the ‘spiritual body,’<sup>1</sup> the progressive stages of that development consist, we may suppose, of a gradual preparation, in the region of man’s spiritual being, for that final change: ‘From glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.’

For our Lord Himself, the Second Adam, is a *Life-giving Spirit*.<sup>2</sup> By His quickening energy the earthly is transformed into the heavenly, and the image of His own incorruptible Manhood is stamped upon His elect. ‘According to His mighty working He shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body,’ and this, in some way, by communications of Himself, as the Life-giving, the Life-making, the Life-communicating Spirit. He Who feeds the soul here on earth with the spiritual food of His most precious Body and Blood, and assimilates it to Himself, carries on the process there; no more, indeed, sacramentally, but by direct communications of Himself; no more ‘through a glass darkly, but face to face,’ until the Divine image is fully stamped upon the perfected human nature, and at length ‘this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.’<sup>3</sup> May we not thus discern in the Blessed Sacrament, so to speak, the unseen link, or medium of communication between ‘the natural body and the spiritual body,’ and trace (as far as in so great a mystery may be granted us) the process of the transformation to the quickening virtue of this Divine Communion? ‘For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them’ with the food of *immortality*, ‘and shall guide them unto the fountains of the *waters of life*.’ . . .

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 44.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 45.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 53.

There, the Holy Ghost, by Whose operation, in the earthly Eucharist, the Divine Presence is dimly and in part made known, shall reveal the Beatific Vision without cloud or dimness, until the soul 'shall see God, even as He is.' Here, then, we have one great consolation concerning our departed brethren, in the fact of this great development of the faculties of their spiritual nature. What mysteries are being revealed to the illuminated spiritual eye, which here on earth so often baffled and perplexed them! The strange things of our human lot; the inequalities and perplexities of life; the shadows which obscured (if they could not take away) the Faith; the meaning of suffering and of desolation of spirit; the dark disappointments of many an earthly Eucharist; all that enveloped in such thick darkness the purpose and the wisdom, and even the love of God; and, more than all, the mystery of His own Personal Being, which was wont so often here to stir, in the depths of their souls, that longing and all but complaining cry, 'When shall I come to appear before the Presence of God?'<sup>1</sup> All these things are receiving their interpretation now, as the spiritual faculty expands, in that sevenfold light of the Spirit, and is made able to comprehend all mysteries. Yes, now, O dear departed ones, ye enter into the True Light; ye are being guided onward to the very Fountain of Light, 'in Whom is no darkness at all.'<sup>2</sup> And *now* ye understand 'what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive':<sup>3</sup>—'those things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. For God reveals them unto you by His Spirit.'

But to sum up: we have touched upon two of the bonds of union, which, in the Holy Eucharist, bind together the whole mystical Body of Christ: the bond of the Adorable Sacrifice, and the bond of the Living Food. And these two combine in a third and central bond, viz.: the Bond of the Presence of the Lamb. For here at the Altar we meet together, under the shadow of that Presence. And the Lamb,

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xlii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 1 St. John i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.



'Who sitteth on the throne,' and Who is present at the earthly altar also, 'shall spread His tabernacle'<sup>1</sup> over us. Here we all gather: those yet toiling in the flesh, and those who have entered into rest; *they*, from their unseen resting-place within the veil; *we*, from our various scenes of toil and strife and suffering here, but *all* together; all in one; all gathered at the Feet of our Adorable Lord.

May the One Spirit, indeed, unite, and inspire, and purify us all! 'until the day breaks and the shadows flee away';<sup>2</sup> and in the light of the Resurrection-morning both *we* and *they* 'behold, with open face, the Glory of the Lord.'<sup>3</sup>

J. P. F. DAVIDSON, *A Sermon.*

So, Lord, at length when Sacraments shall cease,  
May we be one with all Thy Church above.  
One with Thy Saints in one unbroken peace,  
One with Thy Saints in one unbounded love;  
More blessed still, in peace and love to be  
One with the Trinity in Unity.

*Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 553.

*Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—*  
St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Believe that heaven has not taken Christ away from you, but brought Him nearer to you; and that He has ascended up on high, not that He, in Whom alone is life, might empty this earth of His presence, but that He might fill all things, not this earth only, but all worlds, past, present, and to come. Believe that wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there He is in the midst of them; that the Holy Communion is the sign of His perpetual presence; and that when you kneel to receive the bread and wine, Christ is as near you—spiritually, indeed, and invisibly, but really and truly—as near you as those who are kneeling by your side.

And if it be so with Christ, then it is so with those who

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon ii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.



are Christ's, with those whom we love. It is the Christ in them which we love ; and that Christ in them is their hope of glory ; and that glory is the glory of Christ. They are partakers of His death, therefore they are partakers of His resurrection. Let us believe that blessed news in all its fulness, and be at peace. A little while and we see them ; and again a little while and we do not see them. But why ? Because they are gone to the Father, to the source and fount of all life and power, all light and love, that they may gain life from His life, power from His power, light from His light, love from His love—and surely not for naught ?

Surely not for naught. For if they were like Christ on earth, and did not use their powers for themselves alone, if they are to be like Christ when they shall see Him as He is, then, more surely, will they not use their powers for themselves, but, as Christ uses His, for those they love.

Surely, like Christ, they may come and go, even now, unseen. Like Christ, they may breathe upon our restless hearts and say, Peace be unto you—and not in vain. For what they did for us when they were on earth they can more fully do now that they are in heaven. They may seem to have left us, and we, like the disciples, may weep and lament. But the day will come when the veil shall be taken from our eyes, and we shall see them as they are, with Christ, and in Christ for ever ; and remember no more our anguish for joy that a man is born into the world, that another human being has entered that one true, real, and eternal world, wherein is neither disease, disorder, change, decay, nor death, for it is none other than the Bosom of the Father.

CHARLES KINGSLEY, *All Saints' Day and other Sermons.*

### Prayer.

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who duly receive these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us ; and that we

are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people ; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting Kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for us to walk in ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

*Communion Office.—The Prayer Book.*

Before one Altar kneeling  
 We worshipped side by side,  
 Thy sacred Presence feeling  
 O Jesu Crucified.  
 With angels and archangels  
 We offered praise and prayer ;  
 But some who knelt beside us  
 No more may worship there.

Yet in the high thanksgiving  
 We deem they bear their part :  
 The blessed dead, the living,  
 Alike are one in heart ;  
 Although their holy voices  
 Have soared to loftier strains,  
 The one great Church rejoices  
 That fellowship remains.

Then pray we for the living,  
 Then plead we for the dead,  
 (For quick and dead are gathered  
 In one, the only Head).  
 From 'glory unto glory'  
 That those may take their way ;  
 For grace that those may follow  
 To greet them if they may.

And so in full communion  
We offer praise and prayers,  
They in our hearts remembered  
As we are borne in theirs.  
At one High Altar kneeling,  
We worship side by side ;  
The same dread Presence feeling,  
O Jesu Crucified.

BASIL EDWARDS, *Songs of a Parish Priest.*

*All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints give thanks  
unto Thee.*—Psalm cxlv. 10. P. B. V.

PART IV.

THE LIFE EVERLASTING



scarcely any eyes but those of God and His holy angels. 'Such honour have all His Saints';<sup>1</sup> and, perhaps, most of all those who are His 'secret ones.'

P. G. MEDD, *The One Mediator*.

We must learn to realise the City, and its Citizens,<sup>2</sup> the Society, the Company,<sup>3</sup> in which our true life is thrown:—giving some time, quietly and calmly, to take in these unseen realities,<sup>4</sup> so as to gain a truer apprehension of the world invisible. To us, in this present world, it is invisible; and yet, in one sense, it is as present as this visible world. It is a real world, now going on, into which any of us may, any day, be called to enter. It is around us now. The majority of men are there already; and most of us will also be there, before fifty years are over.

BISHOP WEBB, *On the Holy Spirit*.

To have our conversation in Heaven is to live in this world as those who belong to a higher and more glorious one, to live on earth as if earth were heaven; to behave as those who know that, through the Incarnation and Atoning Passion of Christ, heaven and earth are one, and that the baptised members of Christ's Church are one great and holy family together with those pure spirits of just men made perfect who have passed to their rest and with the angels; to speak, and think, and act, as those who know that they are the subjects of the King of Heaven, Whose Eye is ever on them, and Whose work they may be doing every moment.

R. W. RANDALL, *Life in the Catholic Church*.

O eternal Kingdom, Kingdom of all ages, where is light that fails not, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding; wherein the souls of the Saints are at rest, 'and everlasting joy is on their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away!'<sup>5</sup> O how

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxlix. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xlviii.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. xlviii. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. xii. 22-24.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah xxxv. 10.

glorious is the Kingdom in which all Thy Saints, O Lord, reign with Thee, clothed with light as with a garment, having crowns of precious stones on their heads. O kingdom of everlasting bliss, where Thou, O Lord, the hope of the Saints, and their diadem of glory, art seen face to face by the Saints, gladdening them on all sides with that peace of Thine which passeth all understanding ! There is joy without end, gladness without sorrow, health without pain, life without toil, light without darkness, life without death, all good without any evil. . . . There the Supreme Good is enjoyed, which is to see for ever the face of the Lord of hosts.

Happy then are they who have already succeeded in coming home from the shipwrecks of this present life to such great joys.

O Country of safety, we behold thee from afar ; from this sea we greet thee, from this valley we sigh after thee ; and we strive with tears, if haply we may reach thee. O Hope of mankind, Christ, God of God, our refuge and strength, whose light, beaming from afar amid the dark mists over the tempestuous sea, like the ray of a star of the sea shines brightly before us, that we may be guided to the harbour ; steer our bark, O Lord, with Thine own right hand, by the rudder of Thy Cross, let us not perish in the billows, let not the raging water drown us, nor the deep swallow us up, but by the power of Thy Cross draw us from this sea to Thyself, our only consolation, Whom we can scarcely discern though our tears, from afar off, as the Morning Star and the Sun of Righteousness, awaiting us on the shore of the heavenly Country. Lo, we cry aloud unto Thee, we, Thy redeemed, but now also Thy banished ones, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious Blood : 'Hear us, O God of our Salvation, Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those in the sea afar !' wild is the sea through which we are faring onward ; Thou art standing on the shore, and looking on our dangers, save us for Thy Name's Sake.

ST. AUGUSTINE, *from 'Faith and Life,'* by W. BRIGHT.

### Prayer.

O Eternal Father, Thou that sittest in Heaven invested with essential glories and divine perfections. Fill my soul with so deep a sense of the excellency of spiritual and heavenly things, that my affections being weaned from the pleasures of the world and the false allurements of sin, I may with the prudence of holy discipline, with clear resolutions, and a free spirit, have my conversation in heaven and heavenly employments; that being in affections as in my condition a pilgrim and a stranger here, I may covet after and labour for an abiding city, and at last may enter into and for ever dwell in that heavenly Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JEREMY TAYLOR, *from the 'Book of Private Prayer.'*

### The King of Glory.

*Where I am, there shall also My servant be.*—St. John xii. 26.

WE are specially told in Scripture never to think of our Lord as having gone away and left His Church, but always to think of Him as now reigning, now occupying His throne in Heaven, and from thence ruling over all. He rules in His invisible dominions, among the spirits of just men made perfect; He rules in the Church here below still in the flesh. There He receives a perfect obedience, here an imperfect one; but He still rules over all, and though we may, many of us, resist His will here, He overrules even that resistance to the good of the Church, and conducts all things and events by His spiritual providence to their great final issue. 'The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient; He sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.'<sup>1</sup> This day<sup>2</sup> especially puts before us our Lord in His human nature, because it was in that nature that He ascended up to Heaven. 'Thou madest Him lower than the angels, to crown Him with glory and worship: Thou madest Him to have dominion over the

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xcix. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Preached on Ascension Day.

works of Thine hands, and hast put all things in subjection under His feet.<sup>1</sup> So was it accomplished on the day when our Lord, even as the Apostles beheld Him, 'was taken up and received into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.'<sup>2</sup> 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.'<sup>3</sup> Let us worship Him in that seat in heaven; let us worship Him as Judge and Intercessor. As Judge, who sees into all hearts; and as Intercessor, who pleads our cause. Let us worship Him with fear and love, remembering both His insight into us, and His compassion for us. He pleads, as perfect and sinless man, as the Second Adam, for the whole of the fallen race of Adam. He is our merciful and faithful High Priest; knowing our infirmities, inasmuch as He Himself has had experience of them; and knowing the strength of our temptations, inasmuch as He Himself also was tempted. Let us worship our Lord Jesus Christ, then, both with fear and love; but also remembering that in those in whose hearts He dwells, perfect love casteth out fear. We were once enemies, but now we are reconciled to the Father by Him;<sup>4</sup> and being reconciled unto God by the death of His Son, much more shall we be saved by His life. He hath led captivity captive and received gifts for men. By one man, Jesus Christ, the grace of God and the gift by grace, hath abounded unto many. By the righteousness of One the free gift hath come upon all men to justification of life; as sin hath reigned unto death, so does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. And as by one man's offence death reigned by one; so by One, Jesus Christ, shall they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, reign in life eternal.<sup>5</sup> Even so has He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. He has conquered the devil, He has freed us from the chains of sin, or that power of sin in our nature which, by one man's offence, we inherit. He hath put all enemies under His feet, even death itself, which, through Him, is swallowed up in victory. These are His

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii. 7, 8.<sup>2</sup> St. Mark xvi. 19.<sup>3</sup> Psalm xxiv. 7.<sup>4</sup> Rom. v. 10.<sup>5</sup> Rom. xv. 17.



captives. Again, He has endowed us with grace, and with the gift of righteousness, and hath opened to us the doors of heaven,—these are His gifts. Let us show our thankfulness for them by raising our hearts to Him in prayer, by endeavouring to live as citizens of heaven, and as risen with Christ, and by seeking ‘those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.’<sup>1</sup>

J. B. MOZLEY, *University and other Sermons.*

### Collect.

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens ; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

*Ascension Day.*

The sun had set in glory ; clouds of gold  
 Were fringed with wondrous purple ; crimson bars  
 Reddened the foaming billows as they rolled,  
 Till from heaven’s blue gleamed out the silent stars.

Then passed the moon up to her queenly throne,  
 The waters flashed with gems and glittering ore ;  
 All earth was hushed to stillness, save the moan  
 Of the monotonous waves along the shore.

I watched the strange clouds as they floated by,  
 Some dark and murky, with a threatening glare ;  
 Some white and fleecy mounting up the sky,  
 Like veiled angels on a shadowy stair.

And while I gazed I wondered what might be  
 The new, diviner Land for which we wait ;  
 For earth itself, from stain of evil free,  
 Would gleam with glory from the Golden Gate.

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 1.

But there no clouds shall gather, and no more  
The ocean rage—emblem of deep unrest ;  
No storms shall sweep across that radiant shore,  
No night shall shroud that City of the blest !

This earth is beautiful ; o'er land and sea  
The mighty shadow of God's thought is cast,  
But brighter far the Home that is to be,—  
O Christ ! receive us to that Home at last !

R. H. BAYNES.

## CHAPTER II.

### The Coming of Christ.

*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.*—Titus ii. 13.

In the first Advent God veiled his Divinity in flesh to prove the faithful; in the second Advent He will manifest His Glory to reward their faith.—S. CHRYSOSTOM.

*Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.*—Rev. i. 7.

THE hour is coming when each of us—with a consciousness of soul as clear as the sight of the eye of the body—when each of us shall see the fairest, the most awful vision, the coming of Christ! Here we see but dimly; *there* will be the full revelation.

. . . When Christ comes, this is certain, He will come revealing 'hidden things of darkness,' ay! and hidden things of light. It will be a time of unveiling. . . . It will be a moment of startling and complete revelation.

Life here is in deepest shadow, but nothing, since the beginning of creation, has been so wrapped in shadow as the fact and the consequences of Calvary; if that be clear, *all* must be plain. And clear it will be. And with it all those inscrutable mysteries so closely related to the Passion of the Redeemer which crowd around our passing footsteps as we march across the isthmus of life. These will be seen unveiled, unclouded in the full vision of the Coming Christ. Christ is the Great Revealer, in Him we shall see all.

What shall we see? This :—1. *The real meaning of humility.* The strange and now interpreted story of the humiliation of the Cross.

2. *The perfected sympathy of God in Christ with all that is truly human,* all that would permit that sympathy by a surrendered will. The sympathy of Christ. The great thought which gives the creature confidence in view of that last assize.

3. *The evident and now intelligible splendour of the ideal of humanity.* Oh ! the surprise of the souls of the blessed, even after they have meditated on the 'Man of Sorrows' in this 'valley of the shadow,' even after they have held with Him their calm and sweet communion in 'the rest that remaineth,' their glad, their overwhelming, their speechless surprise when first they see, unveiled in awe and majesty, the ideal of Divine, of Human beauty—the Fairest of the fair !

4. *The meaning of suffering.* It seemed awful, almost cruel, when borne in the darkness of probation ; but here is the end. In the Light of the Crucified now in unshrouded beauty, the full splendour of that suffering once borne with difficulty, but borne in patience, will reveal what, in the 'valley of the shadow,' lay concealed within it—some inconceivable secret of the love and the loveliness of God.

5. *The meaning of sorrow.* The exquisite pathos, the consoling and spiritual secrets unfolded by God's mysterious tenderness, in the purifying pangs of the tribulation of His people.

6. *For the first time the real loveliness of those whom on earth we 'loved and lost.'* Once we admired them, delighted to be with them, rejoiced in their kindness, basked in their affection, clung to them as our supporting blessings, or stayed them up with the enduring effect of our sustaining strength. They were each a ray from God's own sunlight given to us, lent to us in our march through the night ; their absence was a felt, a penetrating darkness ; for years we remembered and mourned for them, long after our first hot tears had fallen on their graves. Now we see them, see them in their real beauty, in the light of the loveliness of that once suffering, now



conquering Redeemer, Whose unbounded merits, Whose unfathomable grace, Whose propitiating sufferings had made them what they are.

7. *The inner sense of that tremendous sacrifice*, once half guessed, dimly imagined, now known as the one adequate expression of the joy of the universe—the love of God. Words fail to express, as thought fails to travel to, the perfection of the Redeemed.

8. We shall see in its overwhelming glory the *mystery of power*. It could only speak on earth in the mystic but eloquent symbol of the Cross. Here it is plain in the clear revelation. Power elevating, perfecting the uncreated beauty. The power that could deal with the ruin of the creature, the Redeemed the work of the Redeemer, the forces of Redemption—God in Christ.

He is coming with the completed resources of His Passion ; coming to be adored of His saints, and admired of them that believe.<sup>1</sup> On earth we wondered at the rapture, at the boldness of Apostles ; now we understand at last that the ‘light afflictions’ lasting out earth’s ‘moment’ were indeed not worthy to be compared to the ‘glory’ to be ‘revealed.’

Revealed. Yes, what we want is that revealing. It is coming through the forces won and stored in the Passion. Christ crucified—revealing God, judging sin, perfecting holiness—is coming ; the Light of the world is dawning ; ‘every eye shall see Him.’ ‘There shall be no night there.’

Let us look to that day with a sense of awe, indeed, deep and serious, to strengthen in times of temptation, and to sustain in our conflict with sin. But let us also look onward to that day with a prayer for increased and increasing desire that we may have grace to ‘love His appearing.’ Very gradually He trains us, but, if we allow Him, train us He does.

We are weak and helpless, but He is mighty ; our hearts are failing, but He is strong. Our sins scare and overwhelm us, but He died to redeem. Certainly we have ‘pierced Him’ :

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. i. 10.

and *then* we shall see it. But, O fainting soul, to be 'pierced' though in glory is the work for us of His real, His consoling kinship. 'Behold and *see*,' He says, 'that it is I myself; I am He that liveth and *was dead*.' . . .

O Blessed Master, keep us near Thee here, for *then* we cannot bear to be without Thee! Show us this life in the Light of Thy Coming; cleanse us from stains in the Fount of Thy Sorrows; bring us, soiled and struggling, to the Vision of Thy joy. . . .

O Lord Jesu Christ, Son of the living God, place Thy Cross and Passion between Thy judgment and our souls now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *The Mystery of the Passion*.

### Collect.

O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God and heirs of eternal life; grant us, we beseech Thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure; that, when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom; where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

*Sixth after Epiphany.*

### The Gathering of the Saints.

*The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels.*—St. Matt. xvi. 27.

*The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God.*—1 Thess. iv. 16.

WHAT are we to understand by the shout? The word means a shout of command. It is here, it would seem, sent forth by the archangel, as the minister of Christ, and it is presently explained by and expanded into what follows it: 'the voice of the archangel and the trump of God.' We can only gather

from other passages of Scripture the significance of this awful utterance. It may include such an intimation as the cry made at midnight : ' Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him ' ;<sup>1</sup> or it may be that of which our Lord said ' The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment.'<sup>2</sup> And again we are reminded that our Lord will send His angels, for the gathering of His people together ; and this shout may have to do with the marshalling of the heavenly host.

We see clearly that these terms describe a summons, and that, whatever else of meaning is contained in them beyond our existing faculties of knowledge, this is, at least, clear—that there will be a setting in array of the holy angels ; that there will be a command addressed to the dead, which, while none can escape, all may, in the mercy of our God, learn to look for and desire.

Do we think of the archangel's voice as bidding the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of angels to attend the approach of the Lord ? It is, indeed, a solemn errand on which they come—a separation of the evil from the good. There is an assembling by ' angel friends ' of those who wait for Him.

Then will be seen that multitude of unfallen beings who, ever doing their and our Father's will in heaven, have followed with tenderest thought the course of men below, and desired in all-adoring love to look into the mysteries of man's redemption. How shall we greet the vision of that unimaginable throng ? . . . Their work of separation will be only the open declaration, in the face of heaven and earth, of what may be called the net result of our lives. . . . If we have been living our lives as in the presence of Christ, and thus ' looking for and hastening to the coming of the Day of God,'<sup>3</sup> the voice of the archangel bringing his vast array to do their part will be to us a welcome sound indeed.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 6.<sup>2</sup> St. John v. 28.<sup>3</sup> 2 St. Peter iii. 12.

In the signal shout is contained also the trump of God ; and by this we are to understand the trumpet belonging to God—that which is used in His service. The sound of the trumpet had a conspicuous place in the awful transactions at Sinai as it ‘thrilled from the deep, dark cloud.’ And St. Paul, in a most solemnly familiar passage, asserts twice over that it will be so in the closing scenes of all. ‘In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.’<sup>1</sup> From every spot on earth, known or unknown . . . from the great and wide sea also, the summons shall bring them all. . . . It will be no wholly new call. . . . It will set the seal then on what is our choice to-day. And if we will but hear, and in the grace of our Lord arouse ourselves, the trumpet will then introduce that blessing which the well-beloved Son shall pronounce to all who love and fear Him, saying : ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’<sup>2</sup>

For He is there, what He is in very truth always—the Central Figure. ‘The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.’ Here men shut Him out of their sight. Then, ‘every eye shall see Him.’ He shall descend from heaven, where He now sitteth on the right hand of God, according to the angel’s words on His Ascension Day : ‘This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.’ All words of men must stop utterly short of that meeting. The Saviour Judge, and those whom He redeemed with His most precious blood. Only they, we may be sure, can then lift up their heads and look with joy, who have learned in heart and mind there to ascend where their Lord is gone before, and with Him continually to dwell.

J. G. TETLEY, *from a Sermon.*

O most glad hour, when it shall dawn towards the first day of the everlasting week, when there shall be a making ready in the heaven above and in the earth beneath ; when legions of

<sup>1</sup> Cor. xv. 52.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 34.



angels shall gather round the Sun of Righteousness, and all orders and hosts of heaven shall know that the time for 'the manifestation of the sons of God' is come. What joy shall there be at that hour in the world unseen ! and what a thrill, as of a penetrating light, shall run through the dust where the saints are sleeping ! When was there ever such a day-spring since the time when 'God said, Let there be light ; and there was light' ? He shall come and all His shining ones ; ten thousand times ten thousand, whose countenances are 'like lightning,' and their 'raiment white as snow,' all the heavenly Court—angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim—clad in unimaginable splendours ; and the righteous shall arise from the grave, and the earth shall be lightened with their glory ; they shall stretch forth their hands to meet Him, and bow themselves before the brightness of His coming. O blessed hour, after all the sorrows, and wrongs, and falsehoods, and darkness, and burdens of life, to see Him face to face ; to be made sinless : to shine with an exceeding strength ; to be as the light in which there 'is no darkness at all' ! Be this our hope, our chiefest toil, our almost only prayer.

H. E. MANNING, *Sermons*.<sup>1</sup>

### Prayer.

Come, Lord Jesus Christ, and visit us in peace ; come and bring forth Thy captives from their dungeon, that they may praise Thee with a perfect heart ! Come, Thou Desire of all nations, show Thy Face and we shall be saved ! Come, our Light, our Redeemer, bring our souls out of prison that we may give thanks unto Thy Name. Blessed are they who have passed over the great and wide sea to the eternal shore, and are now blessed in their desired rest. Blessed are they who have escaped from all evils, and are secure of their unfading glory in Thee, thou Kingdom of Blessedness ! . . . Hear us, O Lord, and bring us to the everlasting Haven. Amen.

*From 'The Treasury of Devotion.'*

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i.

We wait for Thee,  
O Long-expected, Long-desired, for Thee !  
Hast Thou not said, and shalt Thou not make it good ?  
' Quick is My coming ! ' therefore all our cry  
Is his to whom Thou gavest of Thine hour  
Apocalyptic vision : ' Even so,  
Lord Jesus, come ' ; roll back Thy heavens and come,  
O Saviour, unto Whom are all things given,  
Come with Thy voice of love and claim Thine own !  
Good Shepherd—knowing all and known of all—  
Oh come, and call Thy sheep from off the wild !  
Monarch, in mercy and in power supreme,  
Take for Thine own the kingdoms of the world !  
God ! Whose high thoughts and ways are over ours,  
As yonder heaven sublime above the earth,  
Come in Thine own good time ; we wait for Thee !

S. J. STONE, *S. Augustine and Monica.*

## CHAPTER III.

### The Resurrection of the Body.

*If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.—Rom. viii. 11.*

*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. . . . Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. xv. 51-7.*

THE Catholic Faith proclaims ‘the Resurrection of the body.’ What does it mean?

It means that for every child of man the hour is coming when the body—the frail and crumbling temple of the soul—shall pass from the house of corruption to conditions of an evident and sensible existence, endowed with movement, gifted with life; the form will be the same as in the days of the old life long ago. And if it be asked by what power this overwhelming miracle is wrought, the answer is, in Apostolic phrase, by ‘the glory of God.’

It is true that *this* was not a truth in the Christian revelation altogether new to men. Undoubtedly the prophecy of Daniel expressed it in some measure, if not the poetry of Job; doubtless also Martha evidenced a knowledge of such a truth when she conversed with Christ not far from her dead brother’s grave. But it was Christ Who ‘brought life and immortality

to light by the Gospel'; and it was also Christ Who clearly taught and evidenced the fact that *the body* shall rise again, whilst He also evidenced the truth in His own Divine person that in very deed it must die. . . . If *the whole* man has had to pay the penalty of sin, the body in its dissolution, the soul in its disembodiment, reason herself demands, what revelation asserts, that *the whole* man should share the victory—the body by a splendid reconstruction, the soul by restoration to its ancient home. God's promise of man's entire beatitude is a pledge that this article of the Christian Creed is true.

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, *The Mystery of the Passion*.

The nature of the resurrection body is to be learned from the description given us of our Lord's own Body after the resurrection; and by St. Paul's deductions from the same. It was by rising from the dead Himself that Christ 'lighted up life and incorruption.'<sup>1</sup> There are two cautions which must reverently be borne in mind, however, in applying to ourselves what was seen in Him. First, His Body was the Body of the Incarnate Word; and as He was able to do with it, even before death, what other men cannot do, so it may have been afterwards. And, on the other hand, His Body, during the forty days, was not seen in the final state of glorification, but only in the initial stage of its return from death.

Yet with this reserve, we may find an abundance of instruction to gather concerning our own future. His Body was seen, and felt, to be a real body. He does not say 'of flesh and blood,' but of 'flesh and bones.'<sup>2</sup> It was still in such relations with this material universe that His disciples 'ate and drank with Him after that He rose from the dead.'<sup>3</sup> It was undoubtedly the same Body with which He had been born and had lived and died, not a different one. In token of this, He showed them His hands, His feet, and His side, where there were still traces of the death which He had suffered.<sup>4</sup> Upon this identity of His resurrection Body with

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Acts. x. 41.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 39.

<sup>4</sup> St. John xx. 20.



His natural Body, He even bases the proof of His own personal identity, 'that it is I Myself,' as if He could not have been Himself had He appeared in another body. And yet the changes which have taken place in it are no less remarkable than the signs of continuity. It is not always and at once to be recognised, even by those who are familiar with Him, either by look, or by tones of voice. Some sort of spiritual preparation is required in order to be on a perfect understanding with it.

Once we even read of His appearing 'in a different form.'<sup>1</sup> Even on an occasion when they were expecting Him, and had been appointed to meet Him, 'some were in two minds' when He appeared, not knowing what to make of it.<sup>2</sup> If still able to draw breath from the air, and to eat the food which was given, and to walk upon the ground, Christ's resurrection Body was not tied to these things. In a chamber where no doors are opened, He suddenly starts into view.<sup>3</sup> He no less suddenly 'vanishes out of sight'<sup>4</sup> when it pleases Him. His Body is able at will to move upwards through the air.<sup>5</sup>

Such are some of the indications which Christ vouchsafed to give us of the relations of the resurrection body to this in which we now are. St. Paul carries our knowledge a little further, by a parable and by a generalisation. He likens the difference between the present earthly body and that which will develop from it to the difference between the naked grain which is sown and the plant which springs out of it. The seed appears to be hopelessly disintegrated; but it pleases God to re-embody the life which in germ existed in it, and that after no capricious fashion. An invariable law connects the seed sown with the springing plant, and, although science may be unable to inform us why, the grain of wheat produces wheat, and the grain of barley, barley.

So the body which a man will wear hereafter will be 'his own body,'<sup>6</sup>—by no means on account of an identity of component particles, or of similar configuration, but because it is

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark xvi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xxviii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> St. John xx. 26.

<sup>4</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Acts i. 9.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 38.

the only one which could issue out of that aggregate of faculties and relations called now his body, so employed as he has employed it. But the organism which is to clothe the man at the resurrection differs far more from the present body than the plant from the seed. Not only is it more beautiful, and stronger, 'in glory' and 'in power,' 'it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruptibility.' There is no fear lest it should again droop and decay and die. The man has at length reached true immortality. For, to sum up the whole contrast in a word, the body which was 'sown a natural body, is raised a spiritual body.'<sup>1</sup> That is the great distinction. Whereas on earth the man was 'in the flesh,' and in paradise 'in the spirit,' he now finds the perfect union between the two when the spirit, which has learned all that the world of pure spirit has to teach it, comes again into a body which never limits or thwarts it, but which absolutely fulfils all its behests without difficulty. Those who are still alive at our Lord's coming will experience the same change without passing through death.

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

### The Likeness of His Resurrection.

*As for me, I will behold Thy presence in righteousness; and when I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.*—Psalm xvii. 16.

*If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.*—Rom. vi. 5.

How can we imagine now what it will be when corruption shall have put on incorruption; what is sown in corruption, in weakness, in dishonour, shall be raised in incorruption, in power, and in glory; when the world and the lusts thereof have passed away; and we, if we have loved God, remain alone with Him in the company of the blessed, the very body which clogs us now made like unto the glorious Body of our Redeemer, itself spiritual, capable of spiritual joys, a partner in our bliss and adding to its fulness? What should there

<sup>1</sup> Cor. xv. 44.

then be to abate or hinder the fulness of our joy, when 'death shall be swallowed up in victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ,' and nothing around, above, below, within, shall withdraw us from the love of God? . . .

To the glorious Body of our Redeemer shall, if we be His, our vile body be conformed, and that by the working of His Almighty Power. 'He shall change,' it says, 'this our body of humiliation,' change its fashion, and clothe it with another form, that it may be conformed to, and may be partner in the Form of His glorious Body; and that 'according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself.' To whom shall this poor body be like? To Him 'Who sitteth at the right hand of the Father,' to Him Whom angels adore, to Him before Whom stand the unembodied hosts, to Him Who is Himself by nature the Image of the Everlasting Father, shall we through grace and glory be conformed; and, beholding His Essential Glory, be filled with It and reflect It, as It is indwelt by the Fulness of the Godhead. . . .

Great is the gift that we should not again be liable to corruption, dishonour, weakness, but, instead, have bodies whose beauty can have no decay, whose glory cannot be dimmed, obedient to the spirit, and so themselves spiritual, excelling in might, mighty as the angels. But how much more that this beauty and glory and might and spirituality of our bodies shall be the likeness to the glorious Body of Christ; that they shall shine with His brightness, be spiritual through His indwelling love, be incorruptible through His life in the spirit, be swift through His drawing to Himself! . . .

Such is our hope of glory, even for these poor bodies. Blessed be His Goodness Who so cares for us, glorifies what in us is uncomely, dissolves what in us is decayed, abolishes in us what is defiled, that He may enrobe us with His own glory, giving us by grace what we can receive of the glory which He has by nature, 'the glory of the Only-begotten Son of God,' through His Indwelling. For so He Himself said, 'the glory which Thou gavest Me have I given them, that they may be one even as We are One; I in them and Thou in Me, that

they may be perfect in One.' In Him by Nature, in us by grace ; in Him Eternally, in us, in time ; in Him, as Man by Personal Union, in us by Indwelling ; yet still that God should, in our degree, and as far as creatures are capable of, dwell in us, as He dwells in Him, our Head, Christ Jesus.

E. B. PUSEY, *S. Saviour's Sermons.*

### Collect.

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts ; that as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an Angel, so by His Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of His resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *The Annunciation.*

### The Glorified Body.

*They shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.*—Rev. iii. 4.

WHAT shall we understand by the shining garments of Christ and of the Angels, and the promise of the same to the perfected saints in Glory? . . . The Scriptures which speak of the white raiment of the saints or of the angels may best be understood by such an utterance of the Psalmist, where of God he says, 'Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment.'<sup>1</sup> Light, then, is itself a garment ; and the spiritual, or glorified body—that, no doubt, and nothing else—shall be the garment of light, the white raiment of the saints, to which such frequent allusion is made. Nothing outside of them, nothing now to be taken up and now laid down, but the very bodies which they wear, bodies in which mortality shall have been swallowed up in life,—shall contain in themselves the fulfilment of this promise of the Lord. They, too, like Him, shall then be light, and in them, as in Him, there shall be then no darkness at all ; and in sign and token of this, of sin overcome, of the very dregs of sin for ever cast out—they shall have been clothed by Him, with light as with a garment. . .

<sup>1</sup> Psalm civ. 2.



Note who they are that shall walk with Him in white Such as 'have not defiled their garments.' And why these? 'For they are worthy.' . . . There is a worthiness in God's saints, a meetness or fitness for the inheritance of the saints in light;—though that worthiness is itself of God's free giving, would never have been at all unless He had implanted it; and not merely of His giving, but also of His most gracious allowing, in that for Christ's sake, and having respect to His perfect obedience, God allows that which of itself would not for an instant have endured His searching gaze. . . .

What a phrase of inexhaustible wonder is that of the Apostle, 'Christ in you *the hope of glory*'<sup>1</sup>; and how directly does it bear on this very subject. If these white garments indicate the future glorification of the bodies of God's saints, how can those bodies pass through this transcendent change, how can they be transmuted and glorified, except through the mighty power of Christ, of Christ dwelling in them, subduing all things to Himself, and Himself effecting this marvellous transformation?

Thus Christ *in us* is our 'hope of glory.' He is the pledge of a glory that shall be; a glory that is hidden now, but shall be manifested hereafter; according to that other word of St. Paul, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.'<sup>2</sup> The faith, the love, the truth, the purity, which were in God's saints, which Christ by His Spirit had wrought in them, but which were all more or less concealed from the eyes of others, yes, and from their own, by the covering of the flesh, the earthen vessel in which this treasure was contained, shall then burst through the covering which concealed them; shall then flash forth, as Gideon's lamps flashed forth when the pitchers which had hid them hitherto were broken.<sup>3</sup> That which was before inward shall in that day of manifestation become also outward, visible, seen of all men. 'Then shall the righteous *shine forth*'—they, many of them, God's hidden ones till that day, shall then shine forth as

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 27.<sup>2</sup> Col. iii. 4.<sup>3</sup> Judges vii. 19.

the sun in the kingdom of their Father, living epistles of Christ, shut once, but opened now, and to be read of all men. Christ in you, Christ in you *now*, He is the one hope, the one pledge, of such a glory to be revealed in you hereafter ; so, and so only, will you ever walk with Him in white,—in those white and shining garments which saints and angels wear.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, *Westminster Sermons*.

### Collect.

Almighty God, Who through Thine Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life : we humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

*Easter Day.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### *The Crown of Life.*

*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*—Rev. ii. 10.

FAITHFULNESS unto death is the law of triumph. . . . Christ showed His faithfulness to us by dying upon the Cross. He had ‘sworn unto his neighbour and He disappointed him not, though it was to His own hindrance’<sup>1</sup> Yea, though that hindrance came to Him from those for whom He died! ‘For the love that I had unto them, lo! they take now my contrary part, but I give myself unto prayer.’<sup>2</sup>

If Christ showed His faithfulness by dying for us, we shall count it all joy to have our faithfulness tested by following Him in the reproach, the weakness, the loneliness, of the way of sorrows. There is a deeper joy in faithfulness to the Crucified than can possibly be our portion in the way of the world’s honours. . . .

He is the ‘Faithful and True Witness,’ who has gone before us, and the crown of life must be won by us, not as the reward of achievements which the world attests, but in that very fellowship of death whereby He earned the right to give it to us.

. . . He who died in faithfulness reveals by His Holy Spirit to His faithful ones the faithfulness wherewith He died, that they thereby may be strengthened unto faithfulness and live with Him in Glory. That which He reveals to them gladdens them in the midst of their darkness and sorrow. He

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xv. 5, P. B. V.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm cix. 3, P. B. V.

who reveals to them by the Spirit His faithfulness in their redemption, will strengthen them by the same Spirit to be sanctified in the same faithfulness.

‘His rod and His staff will comfort them’ by the way, and in the end each soul that perseveres in love shall hear His voice with the words of benediction, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’<sup>1</sup>

In truth we cannot know the faithfulness of Jesus to our own selves unless we have been called to suffer for Him. It is while we bear the cross that we learn the greatness of the love wherewith He loved us.

How prone we are to shrink from the cross, and yet the cross is the school of Divine teaching. None can learn anything of God truly in any other way. All other knowledge is but head-knowledge. Knowledge gained in the discipline of the cross is heart-knowledge, full of blessed experiences of heavenly inspiration.

There we learn the faithfulness of Christ to us, and the faithfulness which He expects from us. We learn both by action. Gazing upon the cross is idle self-deceit ; carrying it is the true activity by which faithful souls are perfected. Thus we acquire not only the idea and purpose, but the strength of faithfulness. We are weak until we begin to suffer. As we continue in suffering with Jesus, we find the strength of faithfulness beginning gradually to develop. It is a law under which we are born that suffering strengthens character and brings the various faculties of our nature into play. As we triumph over continued difficulties, we gain the grace of perseverance.

This law of nature is met by the reciprocal action of grace. The fellowship of the cross is the means whereby Jesus communicates to them the very strength whereby He was faithful, that they may be faithful in like manner.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 21.



Other masters seek to gain the allegiance of their followers by making them taste the sweets of their power. Jesus calls His followers to faithfulness by making them share the burden of His cross.

*Even so, Lord Jesus, let me contemplate Thy death, that I may learn to die. How can I fail in faithfulness to Thee when I contemplate the death whereby Thy faithfulness was proved? From the example of Thy death let me learn to be faithful. By the virtue of Thy death let me be made alive unto faithfulness. Without Thee I cannot be faithful. Let me lose myself in Thee that I may find Thy faithfulness as my security.*

### Sonnet.

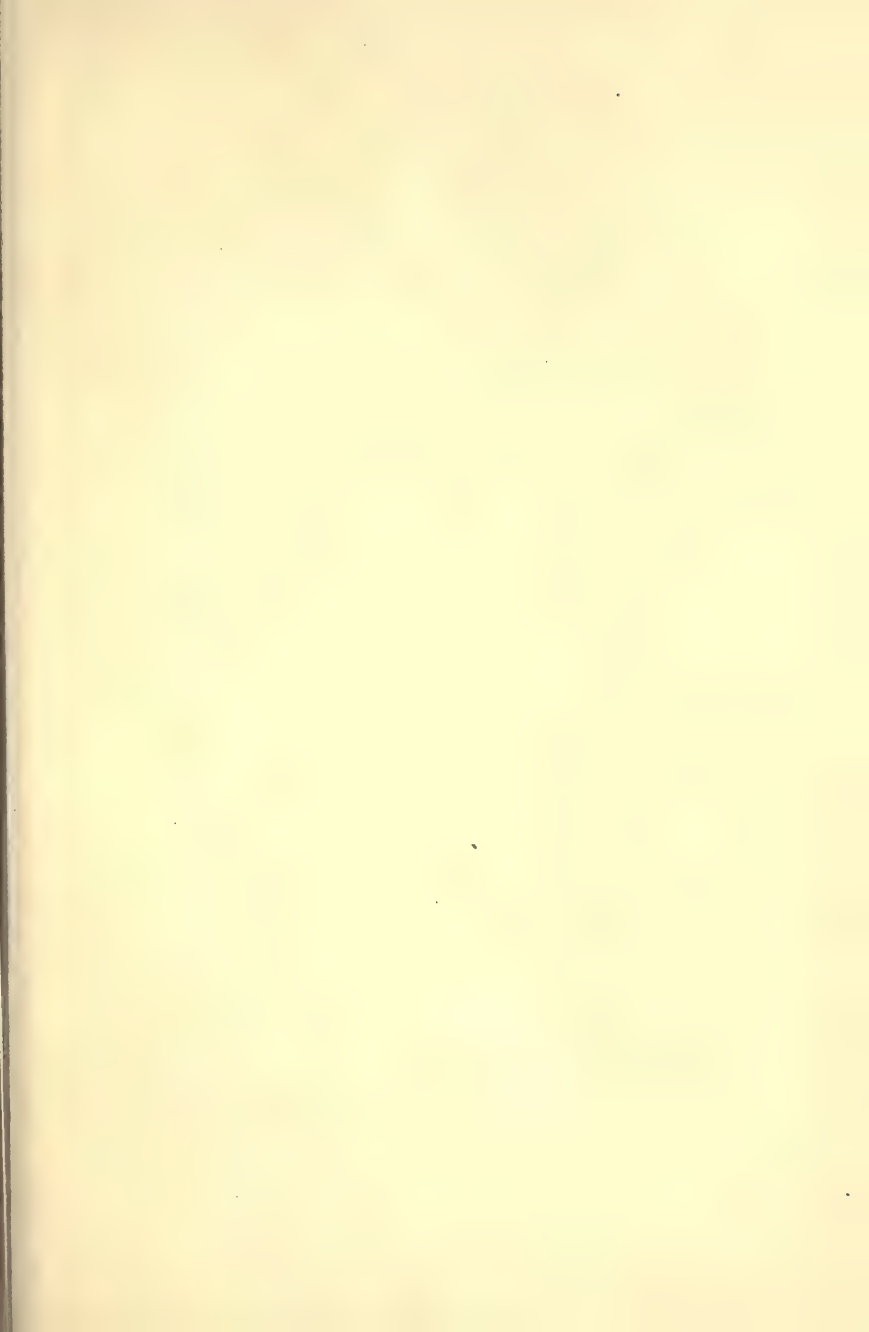
The stars move onward in harmonious course :  
 Two laws control them—impulse, which at first  
 Thou gav'st them when from womb of space they burst,  
 And chains mysterious of attractive force.  
 Obedience, love, their watchwords. They discourse  
 Of faithfulness, in sweetest strains rehears'd.  
 But man, self-will'd, self-seeking, falls accurs'd,  
 Rebellious child and slave of wild remorse.  
 Lord, let my will, stirr'd by interior motion  
 Of steadfast purpose which Thou gav'st of old,  
 Centre in Thee by love's sustaining hold !  
 Who move on faithful track with pure devotion,  
 Shine in the heaven of truth, like stars—nay more !  
 Like Thee, for Thee, as faithful, we adore.

R. M. BENSON, *Spiritual Readings*.

### Collect.

Strengthen, O Almighty King, the valour of Thy soldiers, that they, who in the conflicts of this mortal life are cheered by the Crown of Thine Only-begotten Son, may, after they have finished their course, receive the prize of immortality : through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Sarum Missal.*



BESIDE  
THE  
WATERS  
OF  
COMFORT



## The Crown of Righteousness.

*When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.—1 St. Peter v. 4.*

*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.—2 Tim. iv. 8.*

THE language of Holy Scripture makes us exceedingly familiar with the crown as a token of triumph, a sign of power. When St. John describes in majestic words the completed glory of our Lord, he says: 'And on His head were many crowns';<sup>1</sup> just as in a Psalm, foretelling that same glory, David of old had written, 'Thou shalt set a crown of pure gold upon His head.' Nor does the crown belong to kings only. In different material it is the prized distinction of the winner in athletic contests, 'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown.'<sup>2</sup> And from this well-known instance of the great national games the writer leads his readers on to think of that 'incorruptible' crown, in view of which he himself laboured and endured to the uttermost. Such is the crown for which he is here looking—the last conceivable reward to which human thought can attain, that which is assuredly awaiting him at the final consummation of all things, in the 'eternal and everlasting glory' of our Lord Jesus Christ—for 'verily there is a reward for the righteous,' as 'doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.'

Not that the Gospel, in ever so little a degree, encourages us to be selfish, or bids us calculate on heaven as a mere consideration worth just so much trouble as will bring us there. Nothing could be further from the truth. It bids us be righteous, and at any cost. To do 'the will of My Father which is in heaven,' is the standard of life set up by the Saviour of the world. And then it assures us that under all possible circumstances we shall never lose by it. On the other

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix. 12.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25.



hand the solemn question meets us : ' What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ' For what is the life of righteousness ? Is it not the constant living in the Presence of God ? It is begun here, but it passes on to an inconceivably higher level in the world to come. And what is Heaven ? Is it not, again, life in the Presence of God ? Only no longer by faith, but then beholding the Vision that blesses—as it is written, ' His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His Face. ' <sup>1</sup>

And this crown of righteousness, the imperishable reward of the faithful soldier and servant of Christ, is laid up for every such one. It is the honour, the everlasting felicity, which have all His saints. The words which the dying Apostle uses raise before our minds the thought of it as taken out of some reserved treasure and bestowed. While the long years passed by, sometimes so sad and dreary. While the hard toil went on, and the fight of yesterday made way for oftentimes the harder fight of to-morrow, all the while Infinite Love and Perfect Justice securely stored up and kept the promised blessing.

It may be often a very obscure life, and the events that make it up such as do not meet the eye or the ear of any but the narrowed circle. Its duties may be homely, its victories the most commonplace—that is, in the judgment of men ; not so in the sight of God. He is no respecter of persons, and the hidden story of the lowliest among His children ranks with the most notable of public histories. Nothing is lost, ' We shall find it all, ' says a loving soul, ' a thousand times treasured up for us—each earthly hope which we surrender, because we have a better hope above, when we by His grace have reached the shores of that distant land, where trial and sorrow are over, when Heaven itself shall open before our enraptured gaze. '

This ' beautiful crown from the Lord's hands, ' <sup>2</sup> rewarding the saintly life, and laid up with absolute certainty, is for all those ' who love His appearing. ' This is the test of its bestowal, and this, therefore, is the true test by which to try every heart. . . . It includes every soul in every age in whom the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Wisdom v. 16.

truth of the Gospel has gained a real hearing, and received a real, though imperfect response. . . .

‘His appearing.’ It shall be in power and great glory. He will come to be glorified in His saints. Alike the holy dead and the faithful living shall be made like Him, for they shall see Him as He is.

J. G. TETLEY, *from a Sermon.*

The fulness of glory and joy shall be attained in the life of the world to come. The crown of ‘our bounden duty and service’ upon earth is to become the crown of the adoption, the crown of life, of righteousness, and of joy. But even that crown of glory will be but a crown to cast, as the four and twenty elders rejoice to do, in priestly oblation before the Throne.<sup>1</sup>

The exceeding great Reward will be itself a life expressed in the words, ‘His servants shall serve Him.’ Adoring worship and service, in perfected mutual harmony; the joyful service begun here, crowned in the light and perfection of the resurrection. That future life, as it is set before us, is not so much something new put on us from without, as a development and full manifestation of what we have now. We do indeed see but darkly now; but we have the germs and elements of eternal life, and these will be fulfilled. ‘His servants shall serve Him’ with worshipful service. In heaven service is but another side of worship, and worship another form of service; and all a free and perfect service of full satisfaction, without vanity or weariness. ‘They rest not day and night.’

BISHOP WEBB, *The Priesthood of the Laity in the Body of Christ.*

O may we tread the sacred road  
That Saints and holy martyrs trode;  
Wage to the end the glorious strife,  
And win, like them, a crown of life.

*Hymns Ancient and Modern, 435.*

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv. 10.

## CHAPTER V.

### Heaven.

*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.—*  
1 Cor. ii. 9.

THE fulness of the blessedness of the saints cannot be described. . . .

Earthly things are too mean and poor to set forth the reality of heavenly things. They are but shadows and reflections.

A sacred writer says: 'God is not this thing, nor that, He is all Things.'<sup>1</sup> So heaven, on which He has poured out all the riches of His Power, Wisdom and Goodness, is not *this*, or *that*, but all Things.

'What God has prepared for them that love Him' cannot be understood by Faith; nor reached by Hope; nor taken hold of by Love. It goes beyond our desires and wishes. It may be hoped for and gained. It cannot be estimated and described.

R. W. RANDALL, *Retreat Addresses*.

The Christian conception of heaven is not enjoyment. It is a Beatific Vision of which the Church testifies—a vision that of necessity exercises a conforming power, and constrains those who behold it to live a life of love-inspired sympathy, service, sacrifice, to become priests and victims both for God and man. This is the heavenly life, because the Christ-life, whose highest beatitude is not getting, but giving.

ALFRED GURNEY.

<sup>1</sup> Dionysius.

God Himself is the Country of the soul.

S. AUGUSTINE.

Heaven is the seeing God eternally as He is ; and loving Him eternally without ever losing Him.

BOSSUET.

Blessed they, who are destined for the sight of those wonders in which they now stand, at which they now look, but which they do not recognise ! Blessed they who shall at length behold what as yet mortal eye hath not seen, and faith only enjoys ! Those wonderful things of the new world are even now as they shall be then. They are immortal and eternal ; and the souls who shall then be made conscious of them, will see them in their calmness and their majesty where they ever have been. But who can express the surprise and rapture which will come upon those, who then at last apprehend them for the first time, and to whose perceptions they are new ! Who can imagine the feelings of those who, having died in faith, wake up to enjoyment ! The life then begun, we know, will last for ever ; yet surely if memory be to us then what it is now, that will be a day much to be observed unto the Lord through all the ages of eternity. We may increase indeed for ever in knowledge and in love, still that first waking from the dead, the day at once of our birth and our espousals, will ever be endeared and hallowed in our thoughts. When we find ourselves after long rest gifted with fresh powers, vigorous with the seed of eternal life within us, able to love God as we wish, conscious that all trouble, sorrow, pain, anxiety, bereavement, is over for ever, blessed in the full affection of those earthly friends whom we loved so poorly, and could protect so feebly, while they were with us in the flesh, and above all, visited by the immediate visible ineffable Presence of God Almighty, with His Only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and His Co-equal Co-eternal Spirit, that great sight in which is the fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore,—what deep, incommunicable, unimaginable thoughts will be then upon us ! What depths will be stirred up within us ! What secret



harmonies awakened, of which human nature seemed incapable ! Earthly words are indeed all worthless to minister to such high anticipations. Let us close our eyes and keep silence.

‘ All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it : surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.’<sup>1</sup>

J. H. NEWMAN, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*.<sup>2</sup>

### Collect.

O God the King of glory, Who hast exalted Thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto Thy kingdom in heaven : we beseech Thee, leave us not comfortless ; but send to us Thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

*Sunday after Ascension Day.*

## The Heavenly Inheritance.

*An inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*—1 St. Peter i. 4.

THE glory of the future state of the blessed infinitely transcends all power of imagination ; even when quickened by a lifelong experience of the Divine goodness towards the saints on earth.

Without attempting anything like an account of the heavenly glory of the children of God, it will be safe to say that it must include a fourfold perfection. Those who attain it will be perfect in themselves, and in perfect relation with God, with the world in which they are, and with their brethren.

To be perfect in themselves is to have true freedom, so that they may follow out to the full what is natural to them. Their constitution itself will no longer impose an irksome restriction.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xl. 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv.

They could not be happy without some medium through which to act and to be acted upon ; nor with a medium inadequate to their wishes. But the spiritual body will give them all that they require. No conflict will arise, as now, between flesh and spirit. There will be no inertness, or weariness, or weakness, or pain, or disease, or anything connected with decay.

Nor will there be any need of vigilance against corrupt desires ; for the body being absolutely under the control of the will, and the will itself being perfectly guided by the conscience, and the conscience irradiated by the direct light of love, all power of temptation will be at an end. The whole man will move together in all that he does with an inward unity, like the unity of God. Faculties beyond anything which can now be guessed at will be wielded without effort by a central authority, itself sure and sound with the confident health of a holiness which nothing can seduce.

Such perfect soundness of the redeemed soul within itself will be at once the condition and the result of a perfect relation to God. 'Without sanctification no man can see the Lord';<sup>1</sup> and yet he cannot attain the sanctification except by seeing Him. 'We know that if He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'<sup>2</sup>

The Beatific Vision of God in Christ will have the power to transform those who are admitted to it, in proportion to their power of taking it in. As it will be perpetually before their eyes, and they will never for an instant lose sight of it again, their power of taking it in will be perpetually increased ; and they in consequence, will still in heaven, be more and more 'transformed into the same image from glory to glory.'<sup>3</sup> All will not be accomplished at the first glance. It is only true up to a certain point to say that the day of faith and hope will be over, because they are swallowed up in sight.<sup>4</sup> Faith and hope, like charity, are among the things which will 'abide,'<sup>5</sup> even when the saints know as they were known,<sup>6</sup> because there

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 24.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 13.

will always remain an infinity of blessed experience to be drawn from that inexhaustible fountain of goodness ; and as age passes after age, it will seem to the redeemed as if they were only just beginning to appreciate the glory of God, and only just beginning to be capable of appreciating it. The eternal life of the saints consists in the knowledge of God, in heaven as on earth, and there is no limit that we are aware of at which that eternal life will cease to expand and increase in strength.

Perfect in themselves, and in perfect relation to God, they will live in perfect surroundings. Those 'new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,'<sup>1</sup> will give them a never-ending field for enjoyment, and wonder, and thanksgiving. Heaven is not a place, it is true ; but it expresses a whole world of things, with which the blessed will be connected. Everything which here is charming to the senses will be found there in its glorified and spiritual counterpart. Far as the Christian imagination of heaven is removed from anything sensuous, we are not required to represent it to our minds as so severely spiritual, so unmixed a kingdom of ideas, that the simple and unintellectual and childlike would find no attraction in thinking of it. There will be transformed objects to correspond with the transformed body ; and the relation to them will be a perfect relation,—of mastery, not subjection,—of free and restful delight, not of bewildered snatching here and there. And, unless we wrongly interpret some passages of the New Testament, our relation to the glorified world will not be one of ethical freedom only, but of direct control and government. We are destined to take that place with regard to nature which is now occupied by the angels. Ourselves made 'equal unto angels'<sup>2</sup> in those respects in which now we fall short of them,—in spirituality, in concentration, in reach of understanding, in orderliness, in holiness, in devotion ; we shall be able perfectly to fulfil those functions which were contained in the charge given to man at his beginning.<sup>3</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> 2 St. Peter iii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke xx. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. i. 28.

may even be those faculties which now are employed in artistic interpretation and imaginative invention may become a power of actual creation, and that new realms may be framed through the children of God to the glory of their Father.

The mutual relations between those who are saved will be no less perfect than their relations to renovated nature. Perfected union of all men in Christ is a main part of the glory to which we look forward. But little is told us of special joys for individual souls in heaven; the teaching of Scripture is mainly occupied with what is common to all. It would, indeed, be most false to suggest that the separate personalities of men will cease to exist, and that nothing will remain but a general consciousness of the race,—whatever that might be. St. Peter will for ever be St. Peter, and St. Paul, St. Paul, each with his own continuous experience, which none can share with him at first hand. This is contained in the promise of the 'white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it.'<sup>1</sup> But the joyful experience of each soul will pass on into the joy of all. Even here, Christians are sufficiently knit into one body to be affected by one another's sufferings and delights. But the sympathy which is here a matter of deliberate and difficult attainment, and most imperfectly realised even among those who stand nearest to each other, will then be instinctive and universal. Whereas, now, the Union of Christ's members is a matter of faith and hope; it will then be a matter of realised consciousness and of sight. Love will go out from soul to soul in the same strong and satisfying manner in which it moves in the Blessed Trinity itself. All those peculiarities which in this life repel and hinder confidence will be done away. Hearts will be all open to each other. No false reserve will any longer conceal the motive which prompts every thought and action. 'His name shall be upon their foreheads.'<sup>2</sup>

A. J. MASON, *The Faith of the Gospel*.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii. 4.



**Prayer.**

O Good Jesu, Word of the Father, Brightness of the Father's Glory, into Whom the angels desire to look, teach us to do Thy Will, that, led by Thy Good Spirit, we may attain to that blessed city, where is eternal day, and the spirit of all is one ; where is certain security, and secure eternity, and eternal tranquillity, and tranquil blessedness, and blessed sweetness, and sweet joyousness, where Thou, God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, livest and reignest to endless ages. Amen.

S. GREGORY.

## CHAPTER VI

### From Life to Life.

*He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest him a long life ; even for ever and ever.—Psalm xxi. 4, P. B. V.*

*Now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face ; now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.—1 Cor. xiii. 12.*

WHAT is the Future of the Faithful? It is summed up in two words, both almost inconceivable—Eternal Life. Life—how little, after all our thought, do we know of this ! What is life? Life is love—all powers and faculties bent with all their force and energy upon showing to One Person the love that burns throughout our whole being. This is Life. And Eternal Life is the unceasing, unchanging, unwearying exercise of these powers. Eternal Life ! it is the beating up in ceaseless flow of the waves of love, adoration, gratitude, praise, obedience, glad service, upon the shore, upon the Spirit of God which waits to receive them. Eternal Life ! it is the endless shining of the Sun of the Love of God upon all the countless ripples of the manifold forms of saintliness, which makes the heaving ocean of created Life sparkle and gleam with a thousand lights of Knowledge and Joy and Blessedness.

R. W. RANDALL, *Retreat Addresses.*

*Heaven will be a state of thankfulness in the remembrance of God's providential guidance upon earth.*

The memory of heaven will be a bright and glorious activity. All will be fully present to the mind. All the

moments of past life will help towards the formation of that completed individuality which will then be living in the enjoyment of God. Our own self, as then experienced, will be felt as being the resultant of all the past forces which have constituted the details of life as time gradually ebbed away.

All of those forces have been the gift of God. We shall recognise any indirect capacity of excellence as having been His own special communication to us. We were formed in His image, and these capacities were the medium through which that image was to be wakened into active correspondence with the Giver, in order that the Divine likeness might be realised. Every gift of mind, body, or estate to which we can look back will be seen as an opportunity of rising to the Divine likeness in some particular, and consequently we shall feel in all how great is our cause of thankfulness to Almighty God.

As this remembrance will be the joy of heaven, so also should the anticipation of this remembrance serve as a mighty stimulus to us while we are still in training upon the earth. . . .

In heaven we shall remember all things only in God, and therefore sin as being the life outside of God, having been forgiven, will no longer be remembered. We shall only have the remembrance of God's deliverance. . . .

The saved soul will live in the enjoyment of God according to the measure of its correspondence with Divine providence. We shall look back upon the earth, and think with gratitude of all that God has done for us in order to make us what we are. Heaven will not be the life of successive moments, as earth is, but the all-comprehending moment summing up, to all eternity, all that has been before.

O that I could learn in thankfulness to prepare for the thankfulness of heaven. It is impossible to use our gifts for God's glory as they ought to be used, unless we are thus thankful for them, accepting them as personal gifts from His individualising love. . . .

In heaven we shall indeed know, in a manner far beyond what is possible here, how great is that love of God whereby He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. We shall know

then from what we have been saved, and unto what we have been brought, by this Salvation.

Faith must be learning this before, which shall then be perfected. The grace bestowed upon us in the Kingdom of Heaven as now begun upon the earth is the germ of that glorious knowledge which shall be our marvellous experience when all that is not heaven has passed away from round about us. . . .

In heaven there will be memory of all the gifts of grace whereby our state of salvation has been furnished upon the earth—the ministerial teachings, the individual inspirations, the sacramental communications, the hallowed sufferings, the rapturous contemplations, the comprehensive intercessions, the supernatural joys of loving self-sacrifice—all which grace has done for the soul in the Church, or for the Church in the soul—will be the abiding consciousness of the permanent individual self, as then living, perfected for ever in the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, Who has by all these various means been training the faithful according to some general law of loving care for his own place in that glorious Body. . . .

*Heaven is the perfect consciousness of God's presence.*

In the highest heaven the creature will never be able to grasp the truth of God according to the completeness of God, for the finite cannot grasp the infinite. But our own faculties will operate truly and unimpededly, so as to find their real joy and the full exercise of their powers in their action towards Him.

Our faculties in this present world are wearied by natural decay and fascinated by external delusions. Hence their action is never such as to find a pure delight continuously and increasingly in heavenly exercises. In heaven the presence of God will but be merely a stationary fact of consciousness ; but as it will be always clearly before the mind to apprehend it, so the apprehension will be ceaselessly growing in delightful experience. He will be known more and more. Life in His presence will be a constant advance in Divine knowledge, a continual reception of a renewed experience without any



forfeiture, or forgetfulness, or even a suspended consciousness of that which has been already experienced.

The progress of the soul in this experimental knowledge of God will not be from error to truth, nor from doubt to certainty, but from knowledge to knowledge. Each moment of knowledge shall lead onward to the rest, as each development of the germ to the perfect unfolding of the flower. . . .

‘Whom have I in heaven but Thee?’<sup>1</sup> The consciousness of God will so fill the soul as to leave no room for any other thought. The multitude of the redeemed will not be there as a throng around an earthly sovereign. All will be of one heart, and the love which binds all together will be, not a distinct love, the remains of a distracting earthly affection, but a love to God in all; the consciousness of the presence of God in all others as in ourselves. The love which we shall have to those in whom God dwells shall be but a form of the love which we have to Himself. Whether in Himself, or in them, or in our own selves, His presence will be the object of delight and of glory. So shall God, indeed, be all in all. All shall be one in the pervading, perfecting, unifying presence of the eternal Trinity.

*O Jesu, Son of God, Whose delight is with the sons of men, even that Thou mayest make known to us the glory of the Father, grant us so to abide in Thee that we may behold that glory, according to the mystery of our vocation, for Thy mercy's sake.*

R. M. BENSON, *Spiritual Readings for Advent.*

## Deepening Life.

WE cannot in this life imagine what the bliss of heaven will be. For ‘now we see through a glass darkly’: how can we think what it will be ‘face to face to see God’? Now ‘we know in part’; what a mystery then to us, that we ‘shall know God, even as we are known,’ enter into the very secrets of His love, share in His knowledge, His wisdom, His power, His will, His

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxiii. 25.

glory, His beauty, His love which is His bliss : know God with the very same knowledge wherewith He knows us, save that we are bounded, He unbounded, or Infinite ! Still, after our measure, we shall have entrance to all the thoughts of God, see things without Him as He sees them ; see within Himself, in a manner, as He sees Himself ; we shall be ourselves within Him, enfolded by His Essence and Essential Glory and Love ; and as He knows us by His presence in our souls, so we shall know Him by being taken up within Him, there to contemplate Him, to read His Excellence and His Goodness eye to Eye, more than in the face we here best love, we can read the deepest love, with which any in God here loves us. Truly 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' For the 'good things which God hath prepared' are God Himself ; and no man, while in the flesh, can see God and live. . . .

It may then be some contentment to us, yea, surely, it is an earnest of the greatness of our bliss, that no one in the flesh can understand it. Picture we all the joy of the whole world : not those miserable fleeting joys which the poor world which lieth in wickedness seeks after, but all the purest, brightest, most transporting joys which ever filled the soul of any saint of God ; think we of the calm bliss of St. John, when he knew in himself that 'he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him,'<sup>1</sup> or of St. Paul when he said, 'To me to live is Christ,' and 'not I but Christ liveth in me' ; or of St. Stephen, when he saw heaven opened, and his Redeemer standing to defend him and ready to receive him, and place him by His side on His Throne ; or any who have so loved that they could say with the spouse in the Canticles, 'I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine,' and could hardly support the fulness of the consolations of God ; these had some foretaste, but they could not, as yet, even conceive the bliss of heaven ; for it 'hath not entered into the heart of man.' O deep ocean of joy and

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John iv. 16.

bliss and love, wherein we shall ever freely range, ever longing yet ever satisfied ; ever loving yet never weary ; ever receiving fresh streams of love and glory and bliss from the exhaustless Fountain of all Good, which is God.

E. B. PUSEY, *St. Saviour's Sermons*.

In the infinite progression of holiness that belongs to an infinite existence of glory, we shall be but drawing more and more freely from an infinite source ; the Holy One that 'inhabith eternity' is inexhaustible as the eternity He inhabits.

ARCHER BUTLER.

There will be progressive developments. There will not be stagnation, but growth ; we shall be perfect, yet ever going on unto a perfection which we can never fully attain, even that of the All-Perfect God, Who shall give us more and more of His grace and of His love. 'In the ages to come,' the Apostle says, 'He means to show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.'<sup>1</sup>

BISHOP WEBB, *On the Holy Spirit*.

To Thee, Great Lord, the One in Three,  
All praise for evermore ascend ;  
O grant us in our Home to see  
The heavenly life that knows no end.

*Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 263.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 7.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Reunion in Heaven.

*The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads : they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.—Isaiah xxxv. 10.*

*They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.—Malachi iii. 17.*

LET us dwell on some of the proofs that God has given us in support of what is one of the dearest hopes of our nature, namely, that we shall know each other hereafter ; that death is but a short separation, and those whom it parts here will, if found worthy, be reunited again where there shall be no more parting.

1. The first proof of this is to be found in the very nature of particular attachments. God has made us for them, and we cannot exist without them. Love is an essential part of our nature, and it must have its objects. It was made for man as well as for God. It is nothing to the purpose that in our present disordered state these two functions so often clash and interfere, that we love the creature more than the Creator, giving it that place in the heart which belongs to Him. We need not do this. Indeed, in doing so we dishonour even the creatures whom we love, and whose greatest glory is not apart from God, but in Him and through Him. But now take this subordinate love in any of man's earthly relations and consider it. What does it express and testify concerning itself ? Look at its constancy through life, its willingness to do and to endure for the beloved object. See how sorrow and suffering, and lapse of time, instead of detaching, only serve to rivet it



more closely ; how nothing by which it is tried can weary or provoke—nothing can embitter or alienate it ; how love alone warms even the extremest age, and shines out with perhaps a tenderer, purer ray over the wreck of vanished years—over the long road of life strewn with its fallen forest-leaves—amid the prostration of strength, the failure of memory, the decay of all other faculties, and the heavy shadows of a closing day. Love alone does not die before death. All other things do. . . . Love alone remains, surviving all. And is not this a prediction and pledge that it will still live on, and find again those to whom it has never been untrue ? Are not all God's works complete and perfect, and shall we acknowledge a break and failure in that one work which in our nature discovers most of Himself ?

2. But, after all, this is only what nature says. Let us turn to the Gospel, and see how far it confirms the hope of being united hereafter. Consider how the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation bears upon the fulfilment of it. God the Son has taken upon Him the nature of man in all its essential parts and properties. As He is God from all eternity, so in time He assumed the manhood to Himself in the one person. Thus God and Man are one Christ. But to what a place is our whole nature exalted through this ineffable mystery, and with what a transcendent importance does it clothe every element in its composition ! Whatever constitutes man now belongs to the person of Him who is God. It is something too great to convey in words, yet it is plain that all our faculties and powers are by this union raised to a dignity above that which belongs to any other creature, and endowed with a permanence which awes and confounds the thought. This is what we mean when we say that the Son of God was made man—born of the Virgin Mary. He took into His Godhead our entire nature with all its abiding attributes, spirit, soul and body, reason and will, feeling, affection, sympathy—and made them His Own for ever. And this being so, let us now observe what light it throws on the subject of future recognition. It

must at once strike us in reading the Gospels that when our Lord was on earth, He did not manifest Himself to all those who were about Him in the same way or with the same measure of favour. We see this even in the case of the multitudes whom He taught or healed; but we see it more distinctly in the case of those who were admitted to a nearer intercourse with Him. Some were allowed to approach Him more closely, and some remained afar off; some were distinguished with peculiar favour, and admitted, if I may use the expression, to an intimacy not vouchsafed to the rest. In other words, our blessed Lord appears to have Himself exercised those particular affections of which I have been speaking; this element of our nature appears to have belonged to Him.

If, then, we can thus discover in our blessed Saviour the tokens of this discriminating affection, this choice of one before another to be more nearly and intimately His, the fact is in itself a proof that particular attachments are no transitory and fleeting element in our nature, suited for this state only and not to survive beyond it, but that, by being His, they belong to what is essential and imperishable in us, and will outlive the accidents and the end of this condition of our being.

3. Throughout the New Testament we find particular ties and friendships, instead of being dissolved or weakened by the Gospel, rendered, as we might indeed anticipate, far deeper, purer, and more firm. For example, consider the wonderful way in which St. Peter, St. James and St. John were associated when our Lord drew those three so close to Himself. Must not this fact of their union in Him have been the ground of a friendship truer and more exalted than anything earthly could originate? Or the love of Jesus to Lazarus and his sisters, what must that love have made them to each other? or think of our Saviour's last words to His mother and to St. John, and what an effect those Divine words must have wrought on both! Again, observe the overflowing tenderness of St. Paul to his converts throughout his writings—the way in which he speaks

of his son Timothy, his son Titus, his son Onesimus; Luke, the beloved physician; Barnabas, his fellow-apostle; Philemon, Epaphroditus, Clement and his fellow-labourers, whose names were in the Book of Life; the Philippians, beloved and longed for, his joy and crown; and the Thessalonians, of whom he actually says, 'What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?'<sup>1</sup>

Are these friendships of a kind to end with death? Are these friends for time only or for eternity? Can we suppose that the Apostles, knit so closely in their Lord, ceased to know each other when their life here closed? The existence of these ties and affections under such circumstances, implies their continuance; but, if it does so in them, it does so in us likewise, though so far behind them. For the Church is one, and if we are members of it at all, we are admitted to the same privileges as the Apostles and their converts—as the whole body of believers from the beginning to the end.

4. Our knowledge of one another hereafter may be deduced from the very nature of the Christian Church itself. . . .

The Church of the First-born, the heavenly Jerusalem, the City that hath foundations, the Church of the living God, the House of God, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the Body of Christ, has its home and abode not here, but in a higher state. It does not belong to earth; it is a stranger and pilgrim on earth. Into this society we enter by a second birth, and are made partakers of Divine privileges and a heavenly inheritance. . . .

All our relations as Christians are unearthly, heavenly; and, though they begin here, have not their scope here, but are limited, compressed, controlled, by the elements and atmosphere of this world, by our sins and infirmities, failures and imperfections, and, as it were, strain and struggle through the entanglements of time for that state in which only they can have their freedom and consummation. This is our position as Christians. The Christian parent is bound to the Christian

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 10.



child, the Christian husband to the Christian wife, by a bond which makes those two partakers of a common immortality ; of an inheritance which they may share together or forfeit together, or one may retain and the other lose, but the rights and responsibilities of which have become so entwined and incorporated with the very elements of their spiritual being that death itself cannot extinguish them. Their inheritance—if only they do not themselves lose it—is for ever ; and shall not their union be for ever likewise ?

Their inheritance is only in prospect and anticipation here ; it is enjoyed by faith and hope ; they watch for it, strive for it, look forward to it together. . . . Shall they share together the doubt and not the certainty, all the danger and none of the triumph ? Shall they know and love and aid each other throughout the weary struggle, and not enjoy in common the glory and the coming rest ? . . .

5. I might still add other proofs. I might show how the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body—the very fact of our future identity, that we are to be our own selves, and not something different from ourselves—involve of necessity the recognition of those whom we have known and mingled with here on earth. For what are we apart from them ? Or what is our whole life, with all the good and evil in it, made up of ; all our thoughts, words, and deeds ; all our feelings, affections, judgments, principles ; all our hopes, fears, joys and sorrows—what is the best and worst part of our earthly history, but that which unites us with others ? Is not our character, in every aspect of it, so interwoven with them that to eradicate the memory of those we love would be to destroy our own identity—to forget them would be to forget ourselves ?

O unspeakable joy, next to the bliss of the Beatific Vision, when the Divine hands of our God shall reunite those whom death had parted—unite to part or change no more !

WILLIAM MATURIN, *The Blessedness of the Dead in Christ.*



Is it not a joy to think that when we clasp our friends again in heaven, and look back with them upon the past, it will be to see it, not as we have felt it, but as it is; to take, not man's view, but God's; to know, and know together, that the dark scenes were dark with light too bright for mortal eye, the sorrow turning into dearest joys when seen to be the filling up of Christ's, who withholds not from us His own crown, bidding us drink of His cup, and be baptised with His baptism, and saying to our reluctant hearts, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter'?<sup>1</sup>

J. HINTON, *Life and Letters*.

Think what it will be to us to meet again in joy with those whom the stern hand of death hath riven from us, ere we had learnt to love them as they deserved: to see that the grave hath yielded her spoil, and that the warm flesh, and the flitting colour, and the breathing life, is again restored to that cold and solemn spoil of humanity, which we in tears consigned to the dust from whence it came; to press to our hearts those living forms which last we reverently coffined ere they were removed from beyond our sight; to hear again those accents of joy and greeting which last sounded in our ears as heart-breaking farewells, or pious commendations of the soul into the hands of the God of the spirits of all flesh. Need I speak of the development of every faculty and power both of body and soul: how the homeliest lineaments will assume dignity and grace as they come more and more to receive the impress of the King of Saints; how the soul will expand in capacity as the wondrous objects by which she is surrounded impress themselves upon her; how every department of the mind will become illuminated as the Light of Glory shines in upon its dark recesses; above all, how the heart will be enlarged and the capacity of affection dilated, as God, the supreme end of the creature and the ultimate object of his desire, fills it with His own irradiating

<sup>1</sup> St. John xiii. 7.

Presence, burning out every foreign element and transforming its very essence into His own self ; for there all things shall be subdued unto Him, and He shall be all in all.

BISHOP FORBES, *Sermons on the Grace of God.*

Oh then the glory and the bliss,  
When all that pain'd or seem'd amiss  
Shall melt with earth and sin away !  
When saints beneath their Saviour's eye,  
Fill'd with each other's company,  
Shall spend in love th' eternal day !

*Christian Year—St. Mark's Day.*

### Prayer.

O Lord Jesu Christ, Who hast promised to come again in like manner as Thou didst go into heaven : we pray Thee to hasten the time of Thine Advent, that sin and death may be overcome, and that we with all Thy faithful departed, may be perfected in blessedness in that day when Thou makest up Thy jewels. Through Thy mercy O our God, Who art blessed and livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen. *From the ' Priest's Prayer Book.'*

In the presence of Thy glory,  
Safe for ever at Thy Feet,  
I, at last, shall hold communion  
With the souls I yearn to greet.

O what joyful revelations  
Of enduring patient Love !  
O what infinite expansion  
The long-guarded heart shall prove !

Blending, melting, in each other  
Without let, or thought of fear ;  
All the hindrances there vanish  
Utterly, that hold us here.

## THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS

With full insight understanding  
Thy great work within each soul,  
New varieties of glory  
Every history will unroll.

Soaring through the golden ether,  
Piercing it like shafts of flame,  
Rise the notes of adoration  
To the Source from whence they came.

As the Prayer of prayers is answered,  
'I in them and Thou in Me,'  
Perfect all, in One, for ever—  
Trinity in Unity.

C. M. NOEL.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Joy of Heaven.

*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*—Psalm cxxvi. 5.

*The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of Him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord . . . their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.*

*I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. . . . My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.*—Jeremiah xxxi. 11, 13, 14.

THE highest joy reserved for the creature in Heaven, the joy of our Lord, is not the joy of those who have never known sin. It has been beautifully said, that the pearls on the gates of Paradise are the tears of penitents.<sup>1</sup> The entrance into the heavenly city is through penitential sorrows turned into eternal joys. And surely the joy of our Lord, the joy over which angels rejoice, is the mingled strain of hearts which, as they are lost in God, still bear the memory of how great has been the forgiveness of how great sins, to whom heaven is all the more precious because of the hell out of which they have been raised, who are penetrated with the consciousness of undeserved compassion, while being filled with rapture at the bliss into which they are translated, in whom the consciousness of forgiving love, and of grace perfected in Divine beauty, melt into one fulness of ecstasy. It is the joy in which the sense of sorrow and fear past, enhances the sense of present ensured endless beatitude: the joy of rest after toil; of certain

<sup>1</sup> Neale.



acceptance after long anxieties. It is the joy of the redeemed who sing the new song, saying, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation';<sup>1</sup> of those who 'have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb'; and who, therefore, are 'before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'<sup>2</sup>

T. T. CARTER, *Lent Lectures*.

## The Sweet Opening of an Endless Joy.

*Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*—St. Matt. xxv. 21.

IN the positive Joy of the great Future, each faculty will have its own peculiar and full happiness. 'God will be the fulness of Light to the reason: the fulness of Peace to the will; the fulness of consolation to the memory.'<sup>3</sup>

'The Truth of God will satisfy the understanding; the Love of God will satisfy the will; the Providence of God will satisfy the memory.'

We can understand now something of those deep words, 'In Thy Presence is the fulness of Joy';<sup>4</sup> or those others, 'When I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.'<sup>5</sup>

1. *Imagine God satisfying the memory. Imagine the memories of heaven.*

Every grace in all the past course of life clearly seen; every blessing distinct before us; every peculiar providence with all its issues revealed and clear; thousands of answered prayers; thousands of prayers answered in a higher and better way; thousands of dangers averted; thousands of foolish wishes refused; all the long training and fashioning of our souls made known to us; the chastisements so wisely, so lovingly laid on

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vii. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> St. Bernard.

<sup>4</sup> Psalm xvi. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm xvii. 15.

us ; the gentle weaning from earth ; the setting free from weaknesses, failings, sins ; the beginning and increases of graces ; all our communions with the ever fuller imparting of the Divine Life ; all the going from strength to strength until we appeared unto the God of gods in Sion. . . . Imagine all this coming back upon us, and ourselves wondering, adoring, praising God, and growing in love of Him !

Think what these words will mean in heaven : ' I will call to mind Thy wonders of old time.'<sup>1</sup> And add to this that all around us will be a vast multitude, each one of whose memories will be filled with separate and varying histories of the miraculous Love of God.

The griefs escaped, the rocks, the shipwrecks of the soul avoided, the change from corruption to incorruption wrought out, the numberless mercies by the way, the height of glory reached. Ah ! look up into the starry heavens. Marvel as more and more stars, more and more brilliant worlds come out before your gaze. Think what the heavens tell of the glory of God. And then think what the countless stars of sanctity, each star differing from the other stars in glory, will tell of His Glory Who made them all to shine. . . .

2. *Think of the blessedness of the intellect which He shall fill with light.*

' In Thy Light shall we see Light.'<sup>2</sup>

Oh ! marvellous influx of knowledge when God shall be our Book, open and unclasped to our view. When intellect shall have no dangers, because its powers will be directed unfailingly to its right object ! To see, in some way, the perfect Beauty of God ; to be able, by the Light which He Himself shall give, to contemplate the mystery of the Holy Trinity ; to look into the treasures that lie hid in Christ : the thought overwhelms us now. It will only not overwhelm us then, because He will enable us to bear what He reveals. St. Lawrence Justinian says : ' The blessed soul filled with the Word of God, and cleaving to Him in open Vision, knows all

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxvii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xxxvi. 9.

the secrets of God by intuition alone. It will see God in itself, and itself in God. It will see all creatures in God, and God in all creatures; and so the eye of the mind will be altogether surrounded with an indescribable and joyful sight.'

Oh! what a future! 'We shall see Him as He is.' He is Power itself, and Wisdom, and Faithfulness—and Purity, and Righteousness, and Goodness, and Mercy, the source of all Perfection, and the sum of all Perfection: and we shall see Him as He is!

3. *To remember what God has been to us is much. To know what God is in Himself is more. But to love Him, this is perfect bliss.*

The very bliss of the knowledge of God in glory will be that by its very force it will bear us along till we are fixed heart and soul with all the power of human love on God. . . . To love and be loved by Him; to know that our love is a joy to Him; to rest in His sure, certain, enriching, tender Love as our one Joy. . . . 'What is more blessed than this Blessedness? What happier than this Happiness? What more perfect than this Lot? What sweeter than to live with God, to live by God, to be in God, Who will be all in all?'<sup>1</sup> What greater fulness of consolation, light, and peace can there be than to have the Providence of God always in the memory, the Truth of God always in the understanding, the Love of God in the will?

R. W. RANDALL, *Retreat Addresses*.

There are boundless fields of knowledge in God, and the glorified spirit explores these more and more, and never finds an end; fulness of joy ever, yet the capacity ever increasing; more and ever more knowledge of God, and in that knowledge love and joy unutterable.

F. C. WOODHOUSE.

<sup>1</sup> St. Bernard.

### Mutual Joy.

HEAVEN will not be a lonely place, that we should not there have any beside God to love. Love of our brethren increases, it does not shut out, the love of God. The more we love rightly, God or man, the more power we have to love both. There all will love all. There we shall love all in God, and God in all. We shall in the love of others love God the more, because it is God whom we shall love in them. They will not be separated from God, that we could love them apart from God. God will dwell in all there; all will be transparent with His glory and His love. His beauty (as it does here in a manner) shall make all beautiful; His love shall make all lovely; His joy will beam in every countenance; His wisdom will fill all their thoughts. All shall be full of Him; all shall joy in Him; the joy in Him shall vibrate from soul to soul. All shall love Him the more, because He is so good to those whom He gave to love them and to be loved by them.

*There*, in that abode of love, shall no special holy love be lost. God has not formed us, yea, bidden us, in this our nursery for the heavenly life, to love one another, in all our several relations, that all this, after this life, should cease. He has not bound us in those varied sweet bands of love, fathers, mothers, children, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, friends, or those wider circles through which love radiates here, that the love which is from Himself, and which He has made part of the undying soul, shall die. We could not think, as to the very Human Nature of our Lord, that in the full glory of God He does not love still, with that same special love with which on earth He loved the disciple whom He loved. He cannot change. For *then*, too, He was 'Very God' as well as 'Very Man.' His human soul loved then with the unchangeable love of the Godhead with which It was united. Again, how could He, as man, not have fulfilled His own command, and not have loved with the love of a son, the mother who bare Him after the flesh? And how can that have ceased now? He



Himself says of the twelve Apostles that they should 'sit down on twelve thrones with' Him. And since that holy love of His Manhood abides in Him, in Whom our nature is restored and united with God, how should it not be, that all holy love, which is His gift in us, should abide, if, by His deep mercy, we enter into His joy? Rather it shall be part of our joy to love all which we loved here; only how much more, because every infirmity which, in ourselves or in others, ever checked for an instant the flow of love, shall then have been absorbed into the love of God and God shall fill all with Himself.

E. B. PUSEY, *Parochial Sermons*.<sup>1</sup>

In heaven the love of God will be all-controlling. The love of God is the very life of heaven, and consequently the joy of heaven consists in the entire acceptance of God's will. . . .

Heaven is not a condition of merely passive enjoyment, but of active joy. It would be an unworthy end of the self-sacrificing toil of saintliness to be for ever hushed in a delightful contemplation through a vacant eternity.

Love is a mutual energy, and must be both originaive and receptive. Love is the very glorification of justice, the strong foundation whereon, as our Lord Himself tells us, the law reposes; or, as St. Paul says, 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.'<sup>2</sup>

We cannot tell what shall be the interchange of loving energy whereby the members of the body of Christ shall be glorified, but we may feel assured that it shall be according to order and measure, every one exhibiting some special perfection of the Holy Ghost, which all shall delight to contemplate, and, doing so, not as by any private attainment of his own, but simply in accomplishment of that law of life whereby he has his share in the infinite glory of the quickening Spirit.

*O Jesus, Thou our glorious Head, in Whom the whole body finds its perfection and strength, grant that we may so live according to the law of Thy holy discipline here on earth, that we*

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii. 2.

*may be able to rise to the energies of Thy glory, as it shall be manifested in each of Thy saints, according to the measure of Thy will.*

R. M. BENSON, *Spiritual Readings for Advent.*

**Collect.**

O God, Who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding ; pour into our hearts such love towards Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Sixth Sunday after Trinity.*

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Worship of Heaven.

*They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, O Lord God the Almighty; righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before Thee, for Thy righteous acts have been made manifest.*—Rev. xv, 3, 4, R. V.

THE worship there shall be all praise. No prayer shall be there, for there shall be no sense of want. All is praise, for all is manifestation and light. All is praise, for all is triumph. All is praise, for all is blessedness and enjoyment. Whatever the feeling, praise, eternal praise, is the expression of it; from the breathing whisper of adoring love which flits through the prostrate ranks of the redeemed, to the full chorus of praise—the high, the universal shout of glory, and honour, and blessing, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

R. WATSON.

*They serve Him day and night in His temple.*—Rev. vii. 15.

THEY are a priestly body. Their service is worship, and their worship is service. He that labours prays, and he that prays labours. They serve Him continually, whether in actual worship, singing their anthems, or in adoring ministry of obedient energy. In labour and in praise they serve their God day and night.

BISHOP WEBB, *The Priesthood of the Laity.*

*They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.—Revelation iv. 8.*

THERE is an unrest of pain, and there is a 'rest not' of joy. It is the sweetest rest, to rest, and not to rest. For what is it but an unceasing, unwearying, unwearied rest, a river of joy which flows on in one peaceful fulness of bliss, without bound and without end? God giveth to the blessed, in their measure, to be like Himself. *Here*, to continue on in anything has weariness; because here is not our rest. *There*, upheld by God, the blessed behold the Eternal Truth without toil of thought; they, in spiritual bodies, move swiftly as the lighting without weariness; they love God above all things with everlasting love, and all besides with undivided love. They, in their degree, like Him, love none the less, because they love the others more. They love with a full undistracted soul, as God loves, at once, all whom He loves, with the fulness of His infinite love. And as our love, so will our praise be. What is praise, but to say how worthy of love is He Whom we love? But then we shall see without effort, praise without toil of seeking words in which to praise, with the whole unstrained power of our soul; unstrained, because sustained by God. Do we not find here, that if we would praise whom we deeply love, our words fail us? Is not our deepest praise to dwell in silent thought, gazing and feeling what is beyond our power to utter? And it is our deepest rest, so, entranced in love, to love without thought, or word, or motion, but in our inmost souls, to go forth out of ourselves, and dwell, without rest, on and in that which we love.

All, as it is most perfect here, is but a shadow of perfection there. Youth is but an image of everlasting freshness; beauty of form is but a faint picture of the brightness of immortal glory; the harmony of music, the most unearthly sound upon this earth, is but an echo of those angel choirs in which the redeemed shall fill up the perfect unison of the new heaven and the new earth. No joy of any sense shall be wanting there,



but all shall be purified, heightened, glorified. Blessed, eternally blessed, they, who bear their part in the songs of heavenly melody, in which countless voices of the glorified, with wondrous and inconceivable sweetness, shall, from end to end of the realms of the redeemed, blend in one Alleluia, 'to Him Who sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb.' 'Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they shall still be praising Thee.' Not as though, in the new song, we shall evermore praise God in the use of the self-same human words. Angels and men shall then have one tongue wherewith to praise God.

In the praise of eternity, we shall evermore 'still be praising Thee.' Evermore in the eternity of praise there will be an eternity of praise beyond. There will be no end of praise, because there is no end of His glory and greatness and goodness which we shall praise.

. . . Our whole heavenly life will be praise, because our whole heavenly life will be love. With our inmost souls we shall love Him, thank Him, admire Him, adore Him. In whatever way we shall then utter what is above utterance, or think what is above thought, or love what no heart of man can contain, or whatever the rest of our life in God shall be, we shall ever be enwrappt with the love of Him, ever be filled with His love, and from that fountain of His love within us, shall return to Him love for love.

E. B. PUSEY, *Parochial Sermons*.<sup>1</sup>

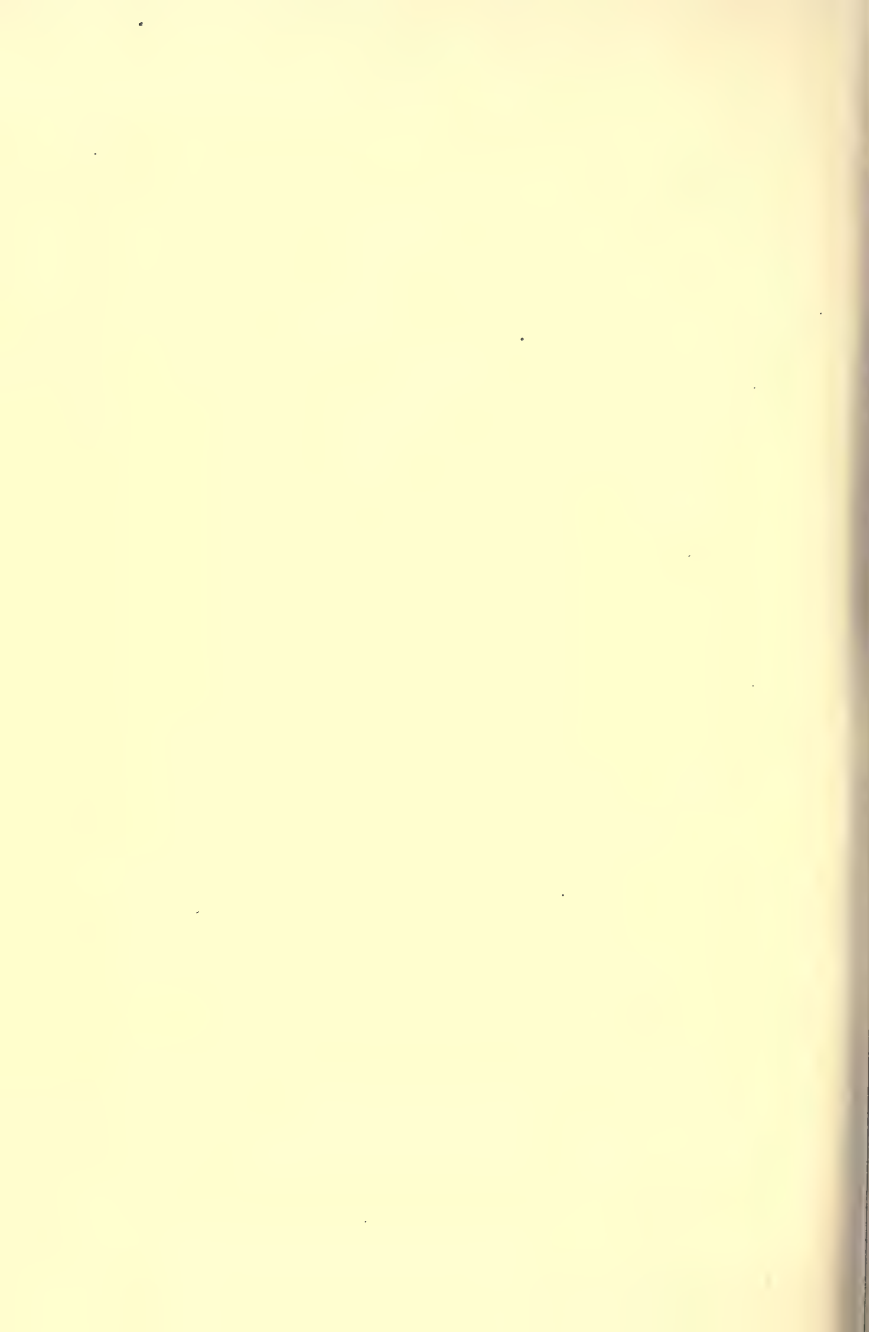
Lord Jesus, give us grace  
On earth to love Thee more,  
In Heav'n to see Thy Face,  
And with Thy Saints adore.

*Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 242.

### Prayer.

O Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, create in us clean hearts and renew a right spirit within us, that we may worthily magnify Thy name. How truly right and just and fit and due it is to praise Thee, to sing of Thee, to bless Thee,





to worship Thee, to glorify Thee, to give thanks to Thee, our God, Creator of all things visible and invisible, Treasury of eternal good, Fountain of life and immortality. The heaven of heavens and all their powers sing of Thee—the sun, the moon, the choir of stars, the earth, the sea, and all that is therein. Thy praise the full assembly of the heavenly Jerusalem proclaimeth, the Church of the First-born which are written in heaven, the spirits of the righteous and of the prophets, the souls of martyrs and apostles, angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities and dread powers; Thee the all-seeing cherubin glorify, and the six-winged seraphin, with two wings veiling their faces, with two their feet, with two soaring upwards as they respond one to another, in ceaseless songs and endless praises, celebrating the triumphant Jubilee of Thy transcendent glory. These hymn forth their clear chants as they magnify Thee with loud voice, singing and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee O Lord most high. Amen.

*From 'The Book of Private Prayer.'*

And when within that lovely Paradise  
 At last we safely dwell,  
 From out our blissful souls what songs shall rise,  
 What joy our lips shall tell,  
 While holy saints are singing  
 Hosannas o'er and o'er,  
 Pure Hallelujahs ringing  
 Around us evermore.

Innumerable choirs before the shining Throne  
 Their joyful anthems raise,  
 Till Heaven's glad halls are echoing with the tone  
 Of that great hymn of praise,  
 And all its host rejoices,  
 And all its blessed throng  
 Unite their myriad voices  
 In one eternal song !

J. M. MEYFART, 1634, *Lyra Germanica*.

A A 2



## CHAPTER X.

### **The Beatific Vision.**

*How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty.—Zech.  
ix. 17.*

GREAT indeed is the reward of the Saints, for it is no less than the very beatific vision to contemplate and adore. That supreme moral beauty, of which all earthly beauty, all nature, all art, all poetry, all music, are but phantoms and parables, hints and hopes, dim reflected rays of the clear light of that everlasting day, of which it is written—that ‘the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.’<sup>1</sup>

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

*Thou shalt set me before Thy face for ever.—Psalm xli. 12.*

YOU will see His Face, from which will look out upon you all the beauty suggested by any and every beauty of earth in the countenance of man or grace of nature. Here we *seek* God’s Face, as it is said, ‘Seek ye My Face; Thy Face, Lord, will I seek.’<sup>2</sup> It is seen, as it were, in passing gleams—it is revealed in glimpses—transitory unveilings in the cloudy and dark days. Like Jacob at Peniel, we are often here in the darksome night, beside the running brook Jabbok, with the wrestling and the halting as our portion: yet with the Holy Name for our strength and comfort. The veil is often but a cloud of glory through which the Lord lifts up the Light of His Countenance

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xxvii. 8.

in peace upon us, while He purifies and cleanses the soul for that vision, face to face, which awaits the 'pure in heart.' . . .

The sons of God, they that are wise, the righteous, are to shine out as stars and suns in the Kingdom of the Father. They will shine only with reflected glory, and reflect back His beauty, from henceforth unveiled for adoration and contemplation. It will all complete our life. Even the glory will not be something strange and foreign—not a blessedness with which we have no sort of touch here ; but the glory with which the great High Priest of Humanity is clothed, from 'the dew of His youth'<sup>1</sup> in the beauties of holiness.

BISHOP WEBB, *The Priesthood of the Laity*.

*In Thy light shall we see light.*—Psalm xxxvi. 9.

THROUGH God alone can we behold God. . . . Of Thee the Light, Who art the Father, shall we see the Light, the Son, in the Light, the Holy Spirit. . . .

O what shall be the bliss of those who shall enter into that boundless ocean of everlasting joy, that Goodness which is the source of all good, that Beauty of which all things fair are but the shadow, and hide it from us rather than reveal it, that Light of lights which lighteneth the eyes not of men only but of Angels ; to behold in His own Wisdom, the causes of all things that have ever been, the orderings of His Providence, by which He 'disposed all things' for good : to behold by His own love, the love wherewith He hath loved us ; to know in Himself His 'love which passeth knowledge,' and that 'peace which passeth all understanding,' in His Holiness to be hallowed as He is holy and in His Perfection to be perfected. What joy shall it be beyond all joy, to see that great sight, for which Moses longed, which comforted Job in his sufferings, for which our whole nature has fainted and groaned until now ; 'with our eyes and not another's,'<sup>2</sup> to see the Living God ! to see Him in Himself, to know 'Him' perfectly, 'even as we are known' of Him ; that nothing of His Glory or Majesty of

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cx. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Job xix. 27.

Love should be hidden from us ; for ' we shall see Him as He Is,'<sup>1</sup> in His own unchanging Essence, and be freed from death and change and corruption by beholding Him Who is Life unchanging and incorruption ! What must be the greatness of that bliss, wherein the Ever-blessed All-holy Trinity rests in all eternity, even Its own everlasting joy, to which nothing can add, nothing can lessen it, for all things exist by It and out of It ! And yet He, our Saviour, the Co-eternal Son, shall bid those who love Him, to ' enter into ' that His joy, ' the Joy of our Lord.' Him, before Whom the Seraphim veil their faces, shall we behold, eye to Eye : we shall know Him Who in the depth of His Being is known only to the Co-eternal Son and the Spirit of Both ; we shall ' see the Everlasting Father and His Consubstantial Son, equal to Him in Goodness and Eternity and Glory and Majesty ; Begotten without beginning or time or end ; and the Holy Spirit proceeding from Both, the indissoluble Bond of Love, the Blessed embrace of mutual charity.'<sup>2</sup>

' We shall see Him as He Is.' He saith not, ' was,' nor ' shall be,' but ' as He Is ' unchangeably, in Whom there is no ' was ' nor ' shall be,' but ' Is ' in His own unchanging Essence ; not as things here which ' are ' not, because they ' never continue in one stay,' but ' Is,' because He abideth, changing all things, Himself unchanged, and the endless Rest of all which now changeth. So shall His Blissful Vision abide, and we abide in it, because He changeth not. He is, and we shall be in Him. How shall our joy pass away, when He Who shall be our Joy abideth ever ?

E. B. PUSEY, *S. Saviour's Sermons.*

### Collect.

O God, Who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy Only-begotten Son to the Gentiles : mercifully grant that we, which know Thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Epiphany.*

<sup>1</sup> 1 St. John iii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> S. Laur. Justin.

## The King in His Beauty.

*Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.*—Isaiah xxxiii. 17.

To see Him is the final consummation of all. There is nothing more held out to man, as nothing higher could be. For this great vision our whole life here is but a preparation. This is the end of creation, the end of redemption, the end of struggle and victory. They to whom it is vouchsafed will have reached the greatest height and the most perfect bliss that any creature can attain.

To see the King in His beauty is to see the beauty of His glorified humanity taken for ever into the Godhead. It is to see that form which the Son of God took to Himself in the womb of the Virgin, bore while He dwelt on earth, raised from the grave, ascended into Heaven, and in which He now stands at the right hand of the Father. It is to see with the eyes the perfect manhood of God incarnate ; it is to see the face of God ; it is to see with the soul the beauty from which it derives any beauty—the beauty of holiness, of purity, of truth, of love, of mercy, of justice, of wisdom, of all perfection. It is to see this, not through cloud, or in vision, or broken by any mediums, but as directly as it is possible for the creature to see the uncreated. It is for the soul to see by participation, to see the more it partakes ; to bathe in the abysses of that glory, beholding and becoming itself beautiful in beholding, even as the light of the sun imparts its light to the object it falls upon, and glorifies that on which it shines.

WILLIAM MATURIN, *Sermons.*

Then shall we see Thee as Thou art,  
For ever fix'd in no unfruitful gaze,  
But such as lifts the new-created heart,  
Age after age in worthier love and praise.

*Ascension Day.—Christian Year.*



### Altogether Lovely.

To be in Heaven is to pass Eternity 'with Christ,' under whose loving rule all things truly human, as well as all things that are Divine, shall flourish and abound. For ever since His reign on earth has begun, though not as yet thoroughly acknowledged everywhere, civilisation has progressed, with its learning, its freedom, its order, its political life, its arts and sciences, its security and joy and brightness and vigour. In short, what has created the civilised world but the rule of Christ the King? And when Christ the King rules without let or hindrance, not only 'the earth may be glad thereof, yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof,'<sup>1</sup> but He will be a Human Centre as well as a Divine Tower; a Human as well as a Divine Lord.

And when we see Him, surely we shall see the Incarnation of all that we admire upon earth! Will He not be the Embodiment—the realised Ideal—of courage, of purity, of love, of gentleness, of knowledge, of intellectual power—of all that is beautiful and fair?

Is He not, already, the Light of this world, as well as of the City of God? For what is more beautiful, here on earth, than the character impressed with the seal of Jesus Christ?—whether it be in the little child, or in the grown-up man or woman, or in the 'ancient men'? What is it that gives a glory to any personal character among us now, but some trait or other of the Character of our Lord—some ray or other caught from the glory round His Head?

BISHOP WEBB, *On the Holy Spirit.*

What will it be to see the Glorified Manhood of our Divine Redeemer; to see His Face, shining above the brightness of the sun, yet in rays of love; to see that look which brought us to ourselves and Him; to hear the Voice of love, which called us and we followed Him; to see all bright and pure and radiant

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xcvi. 1.

with light and Divine lustre, the glorified scars which for us and for our salvation He received, and which ever since have in the presence of the Eternal Father been pleading witnesses of His Love and Suffering for our guiltiness, withholding His anger from us ; and in that sight, 'to have our heart and all our senses filled with His Glory and Love. . . . And because no created heart can contain such love, we shall joy in the bliss of others as our own. Nothing is there but love : and so, such as one's self, of all the meanest, if by His gift he may attain thither, shall in the higher joy and love of all the rest of the saints in bliss, joy as if it were his own. In all we shall behold, in all love God. The praise of all shall gladden us ; each voice, which has learned the new song, shall swell, with its own special beauty, the everlasting harmony ; the glory of each several star in that more blessed firmament shall shed its own special lustre. While all joy in those 'unfailing streams of Mercy, Goodness, Majesty, and Love, and sweet Peace,'<sup>1</sup> which shall issue forth from the Redeemer, 'all shall encompass Him with longings of love, and shall render all thanksgiving and praise,' thanking Him that they are His and of Him, and casting their crowns before Him, joying most of all that 'they are justified by His Grace, redeemed by His Blood, saved by His Love, glorified by His Merits.'

E. B. PUSEY, *S. Saviour's Sermons*.

Before that Light one grows to such content  
That to turn back from it to aught beside  
The soul can never possibly consent,  
Seeing that the good, by which is satisfied  
Our will, is centred there ; outside that rest ;  
Defect attends what perfect there doth bide.

DANTE, *Paradiso*, translated by E. H. PLUMPTRE.

<sup>1</sup> S. Anselm.

**Prayer.**

O Lord Jesu Christ, Thou Light and Life of all Thy Servants, we pray Thee in Thy goodness, in Thy love, bring us with all Thy Saints and faithful servants through the golden gates into the Heavenly City, to Thy dear Feet, there to see Thee face to face in Thy unveiled splendour, there to join the choir of Thy redeemed ones in the new song, the Song of songs, there to unite with Seraphim and Cherubim, with Angels and Archangels, in one unending chant of praise through all the ages of eternity. Amen. *Adapted from 'The Eucharistic Manual.'*

## CHAPTER XI

### The Perfect Day.

*Until the Day break and the shadows flee away.*—Song of Solomon  
ii. 17.

FOR that day we all are, or ought to be, preparing. Some in the struggle of life here on earth, some in the silent calm of the world beyond the grave, we all have to look forward to the Great Day. Not in the Church Militant here on earth, not in the Paradise of waiting souls, is the perfection of the new creation of God. . . .

For that day our work in this life is meant to fit and prepare us. No true labour is in vain; no pure aim or noble purpose really fails; no trial or suffering need be fruitless; all are to have their outcome, their fruition, their satisfaction, in the perfected life, in the vision of God. 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'<sup>1</sup> J. W. HICKS.

Amen ! until there shall be no more 'days,'

Until the Shadows flee,

Until the cloud be lifted from our gaze,

Until in Certainty

Trust die, and Faith in Sight, and Prayer in Praise,

In God's Eternity !

S. J. STONE.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 58.



*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*—Prov. iv. 18.

NEVER during our earthly course does that perfect day dawn in which 'the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father,'<sup>1</sup> nor even in the Paradise of God are its full satisfactions known. On earth by the grace of God, and in paradise through the same grace, is there a progress of the soul towards that perfection of being which can only be attained after the Second Advent of Christ. But in that day the capacities of our being shall attain their perfect development and complete satisfaction in the Vision of God. . . .

Behold, O ransomed soul, the wondrous glory of the Heavenly life! Some measure of this glory it is granted us even now to behold, but it is through 'a glass darkly.' There, before the throne, the redeemed of the Lord dwell in the brightness of that light which is above the glory of the sun. There, as they gaze undazzled upon the splendour of that light, they are illuminated with its rays, and, like the face of Moses on Mount Sinai, their faces shine as God talks with them, they are transfigured with the vision of God. The glory that dwells in the Sacred Humanity, and which even here flows from Him into His own, is there given in fulness unto God's sons who stand, resplendent in that glory, before the throne. Oh wondrous beauty of the Saints, beautiful with the beauty of God! . . .

But there is not only this glory, there is also the development of humanity beneath the rays that stream from the light of God. It is there that the hidden powers of the intellect are developed, and the magnificence of mind is manifested. It is there that the capacities of the heart to love are recognised, for there alone its hidden depths are sounded. It is there that the wondrous energies of the spirit are unfolded, in a degree now inconceivable to us, as it is flooded with the vision of God. There, and there only, is the grandeur of

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 43.

humanity realised, where the varied capacities of each created nature attain their perfection. In the imperfect there is no rest, but when we are perfect, as 'He is perfect,' in the 'perfect day,' then shall be realised by us the joy of the sons of God. . . .

In speaking of the joys of the glorified, there is one point, however, in which the simile of the text fails. Here the sun rises but to set ; it travels to its midday splendour only to give place to midnight gloom.

It is not so there : her 'sun shall no more go down,' for 'there is no night there.' . . .

In the Heavenly Country, 'the Lord Himself is her everlasting light,' and the light that is in Him streams forth upon the children of light in one unending day. Blessed permanence of that unending day, that undecaying light !

There is no night there, thank God ! It is not advance and retrogression, but one unchecked progress ; it is not the interchange of happiness and misery, but one unending song of the children of the day, revelling in the everlasting light. It is this stability of the Heavenly Land which marks its great contrast with the things of time.

It is towards such a life we are pressing—a life where humanity shall be beautified with the beauty of God ; a life where humanity shall be glorified with the glory that is reflected on it from the Everlasting Light. It is a life in which the powers of humanity are perfectly developed, and thus developed are fully satisfied ; a life the very instinct of which is the service of God ; where temptation is unknown and weariness no more besets our path ; a life of one unending day, of one unclouded happiness, of one unceasing joy. . . . Oh noble life of the justified on earth, ever progressing to the life of the glorified in Heaven ! . . .

Unite your lives with Him Who is the Leader of the justified, as they travel towards the glory that shall be revealed, and you shall know how true and how blessed is the saying that 'The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the Perfect Day.'

G. BODY, *The Life of Justification.*

## The New Heaven and the New Earth.

*The kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.—Rev. xi. 15.*

*And I saw a new Heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away, and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God: and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. And He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.—Rev. xxi. 1-5, R.V.*

As man is, so his destined home and dwelling-place must be. It fell with him, 'cursed for his sake.'<sup>1</sup> It shall be redeemed with him, so that 'there shall be no more curse.'<sup>2</sup> It is but a false and mistaken 'spirituality' that ignores or denies this clear Scripture revelation, so plainly consonant to reason and to natural expectation; and speaks vaguely of some remote unreal 'heaven,' utterly discontinuous with all the previous history of the race and every individual of it. It is a dishonour to the Creator's wondrous work in His material universe of Nature to suppose that even this minute and humble portion of it—which yet has been the scene of the Incarnation of the Son of God—must be thrown aside and perish for ever as a hopeless failure, wrecked, overmastered, violated, dishonoured, for all its beauty and its wonder, by the too successful malice of the enemy of God. It cannot be. Not in vain did Christ teach us to pray to our Father, 'Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.'

His will shall be done, not only by man as by the holy angels, whose *equal* he then shall be, but also 'in earth' as 'in heaven.'<sup>3</sup> For, indeed, the contrast, the opposition, shall be done away, in visible realised fact, as it is already, spiritually, and to faith; and 'earth' shall become part of 'heaven.' For

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke xx. 36.

'heaven' is no confined locality, but is wherever God, Who is everywhere, can manifest Himself fully to creatures fully capable of Him. And so 'the glory which shall be revealed in us' shall be accompanied by a glorious regeneration of our ancient home.

The loveliness of nature, which, even in its temporary obscurity and almost ruin, we have loved, and for which, as the wreck of Paradise, we have blessed our and its Creator—though we have discerned, and that but in transient glimpses, the fringe of His garment, the outer skirts of His magnificent beauty and His almighty power—shall be restored and revealed, and that beyond that primal beauty, for the sight whereof, even in its first beginnings,

The morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the faith of the toiling and despised Apostle, whose own 'bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible'; such his hope, as he laboured for the uplifting of the outcast and the vile in the disgusting cities of the pagan East, or, for two whole years, a weary prisoner in the imperial city. To him it was revealed that 'The creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him Who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.'<sup>2</sup>

In full and, indeed, in exclusive agreement with the revelation that the scene of man's consummated life in the Resurrection will be the regenerated earth, 'a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,' is the statement that 'the holy city, the great city,' the 'new Jerusalem,' the 'holy Jerusalem' was seen 'coming down from God out of Heaven, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God'; filled, that is, with the Shekinah-brightness of His manifested presence.

<sup>1</sup> Job. xxxviii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 19, R.V.; see '*Liberty*,' p. 73.



This 'city' is the redeemed and glorified Church, now in the Unseen, and not yet fully glorified, partaking as yet only of the first resurrection ; but which, though now 'Jerusalem which is above,' is yet 'the mother of us all,'<sup>1</sup> the city whereof we, whose 'citizenship' is 'already in heaven,'<sup>2</sup> are already 'fellow-citizens with the saints,'<sup>3</sup> 'the city which hath the foundations whose builder and maker is God,'<sup>4</sup> 'the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,'<sup>5</sup> to which, in inner spiritual membership, already we 'are come,' the city which, alike in the thought of St. Peter, and of St. John, and of St. Paul, was being slowly upbuilded of 'living stones,'<sup>6</sup> until it should 'grow into a holy temple in the Lord (*i.e.* Christ), in Whom' Christians are now being 'builded together, on Him the chief corner stone, elect, precious, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.'<sup>7</sup>

Therein, in its full consummation, 'the tabernacle of God is with men,' in the visible Presence of the glorified humanity of the Incarnate Son ; and 'He will tabernacle with them, and they shall be His peoples, and Himself shall be God with them, their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and death shall be no more ; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor painful toil any more ; for the first things are passed quite away.' P. G. MEDD, *The One Mediator*.

Now fain my joyous heart would sing  
 That lovely summer-time,  
 When God reneweth everything  
 In His celestial prime ;  
 When He shall make new heavens and earth,  
 And all the creatures there  
 Shall spring from out that second birth,  
 All glorious, pure, and fair.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 26.<sup>4</sup> Heb. xi. 10.<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 20.<sup>5</sup> Heb. xii. 22.<sup>7</sup> Eph. ii. 20-22.<sup>5</sup> Eph. ii. 19.<sup>6</sup> 1 St. Peter ii. 4.

The perfect beauty of that sphere  
No mortal tongue may speak,  
We have no likeness for it here,  
Our words are far too weak ;  
And we must wait till we behold  
The hour of judgment true,  
That to the soul shall all unfold  
What God is, and can do.

For God ere long will summon all  
Who e'er on earth were born,  
This flesh shall hear the trumpet's call  
And live again that morn.  
And when in Christ His Son we wake,  
These skies asunder roll,  
And all the bliss of Heaven shall break  
Upon the raptured soul.

And He will lead the white-robed throng  
To His fair Paradise,  
Where from the marriage-feast the song  
Of endless praise shall rise,  
And from His fathomless abyss  
Of perfect love and truth,  
Shall flow perpetual joy and bliss,  
In never-ending youth.

O God, now lead me of Thy love  
Through this dark world aright ;  
Lord Christ, defend me lest I rove,  
Or lies delude my sight ;  
And keep me steadfast in the faith  
Till these dark days have ceased,  
And ready still in life or death  
For Thy great marriage-feast.

And herewith will I end the song  
Of that fair summer-time ;  
The blossoms shall burst out ere long  
Of Heaven's eternal prime,  
The year begin, for ever new ;  
God grant us then on high  
To see our vision here made true  
And eat the fruits of joy !

J. WALTHERS, 1557, *Lyra Germanica*.

O bright and glorious Day, which knoweth no evening, whose sun shall no more go down, in which I shall hear the voice of joy and thanksgiving, Thy voice saying unto me, ' Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord ' ; enter into joy everlasting, into the House of the Lord Thy God, where are things great and unsearchable, and wonderful things without number ; enter into joy wherein is no sorrow, but untroubled gladness ; wherein is all manner of good, and no manner of thing that is evil ; where all thine heart's desire shall be satisfied, and all that thou fearest and hatest shall be far from thee ; where life shall be calm, glad, and thrilling ; wherein the hateful enemy shall not enter, nor any breath of temptation shall come near thee ; where is supreme and settled security, and tranquil joy, and joyful happiness, a happy eternity, an eternal blessedness, the Blessed Trinity, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity, the blissful vision of the Godhead, the Joy of the Lord ! . . .

O everlasting Kingdom, Kingdom of endless ages, whereon rests the untroubled light and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, where the souls of the Saints are at rest, and everlasting joy is upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing have fled away ! Oh, how glorious is the Kingdom in which Thy Saints reign with Thee, O Lord, clothed with light as with a garment, and having on their heads a crown of precious stones ! For there is infinite, unfading joy, gladness without sorrow, health without a pang, life without toil, light without darkness, life without death ; there the vigour of age knows no

decay, and beauty withers not, nor joy wane away, for there we look evermore upon the Face of the Lord of Hosts.

O Christ, our Refuge and Strength, Thou Hope of mankind, Whose light shineth from afar upon the dark clouds which hang around us : behold Thy redeemed ones cry unto Thee, Thy banished ones whom Thou hast redeemed with Thine own most precious Blood. Hear us, O God our Saviour, Thou Who art the Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea. We are tossed about on the wild and stormy waves in the dark night ; and Thou, standing on the eternal shore, beholdest our peril : save us for Thy Name's sake. Guide us among the shoals and quicksands which beset all our course, and bring us at length in safety to the Haven where we would be. Amen.

S. AUGUSTINE, from ' *The Treasury of Devotion.* '

*Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father ; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.—Rev. i. 5, 6.*



## Little Children.

*He shall gather the Lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.—*  
Isaiah xl. 11.

THINK as little as you can of yourselves, but think of the blessed infant whom you presented so few days ago before Christ in His earthly temple ; think of her being even now admitted to serve Him in His heavenly temple, day and night, and knowing and praising Him infinitely better than the greatest saint on earth can do ; and though it is nothing in comparison of Eternity, yet it is blessing enough to assuage your grief—which, however good and Christian, must confess itself to be but earthly—when you consider that your darling is put into her Saviour's arms so many years before the time that most of His servants are admitted there, *quite* safe, *quite* good, *quite* happy, and, I dare to say it, overflowing with love for you beyond what all your kindness and tenderness could have made her comprehend in the longest life that parents and children can expect to enjoy together here. And although David said his child could not return to him, yet since we are taught that there is a sympathy between Paradise and earth, at least between the saints in one and the saints in the other, what if Christian parents by holy living should be supposed to have this comfort among others, that their lost children still watch over them, or in some way or other know of their well-doing ? The thought is not, I am persuaded, unscriptural. ' For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' You need not look further for comfort than these words.

J. KEBLE, *Letters.*

He who loved her best  
Did what was best, and we that wept His Will  
Yet praise Him ; praise Him for the treasure lent,  
For that sweet angel-visit which, unawares,  
We entertained, for that dear memory  
Which makes the past of those five wingèd months  
An Eden of remembrance ; more than all,  
We now have learnt to praise Him that again  
Into His blessed keeping, undefiled,  
He took her back to meet us at ' that Day.'

S. J. STONE.

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand, and led them away from the City of Destruction. We see no white-winged angels now, but yet men are led away from threatening destruction : a hand is put into theirs which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward—and the hand may be that of a little child.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Life, and a long life, is a great blessing, but I have never thought otherwise of a pure and early death, in which the victory is won without those wounds and scars which so many of us carry to our graves. Noble wounds and scars, yet telling of strife if happily not of sorrow. But here, in your sweet child we have the blessing of life—the privilege of an early death, and all the wounds and scars most lovingly and adorably borne by Him Who, we may devoutly say, is now not only her life, but her joy.

Surely if the song of experience is the loudest, that of Holy Innocents is the sweetest !

G. R.

. . . . Little can we guess  
What God hath planned for those He loves so much  
And beckons Home so early to Himself.  
May some full foretaste of His perfect peace  
Fall on you—solacing with solemn joy.

Of such as he was, there are few on earth,  
 Of such as he is, there are many in Heaven—  
 Life is all the sweeter that he lived,  
 And all he loved more sacred for his sake ;  
 And Death is all the brighter that he died,  
 And Heaven is all the happier that he's there.

GERALD MASSEY.

### Prayers.

O Lord Jesu Christ, Who didst take little children in Thine Arms and bless them ; bless, we beseech Thee, Thy child, take *him* into the Arms of Thine everlasting mercy, keep *him* from all evil, and bring *him* into the company of those who ever behold the Face of Thy Father which is in Heaven, with Whom Thou livest and reignest in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Almighty, Everlasting God, lover of holy purity, Who hast been mercifully pleased to call the soul of Thy child into the Kingdom of Heaven, deal with us, we pray Thee, O Lord, in like mercy, that through the merits of Thy most Holy Passion, Thou mayest cause us evermore to rejoice in that same Kingdom with all Thy Saints. Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

I see them muster in a gleaming row,  
 With ever youthful brows that nobler shew ;  
 We find in our dull road their shining track ;  
     In every nobler mood  
 We feel the orient of their spirit glow—  
     Part of our life's unalterable good,  
 Of all our saintlier aspiration ;  
     They come transfigured back,  
 Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,  
 Beautiful evermore !—and with the rays  
 Of morn on their white shields of Expectation !

LOWELL.

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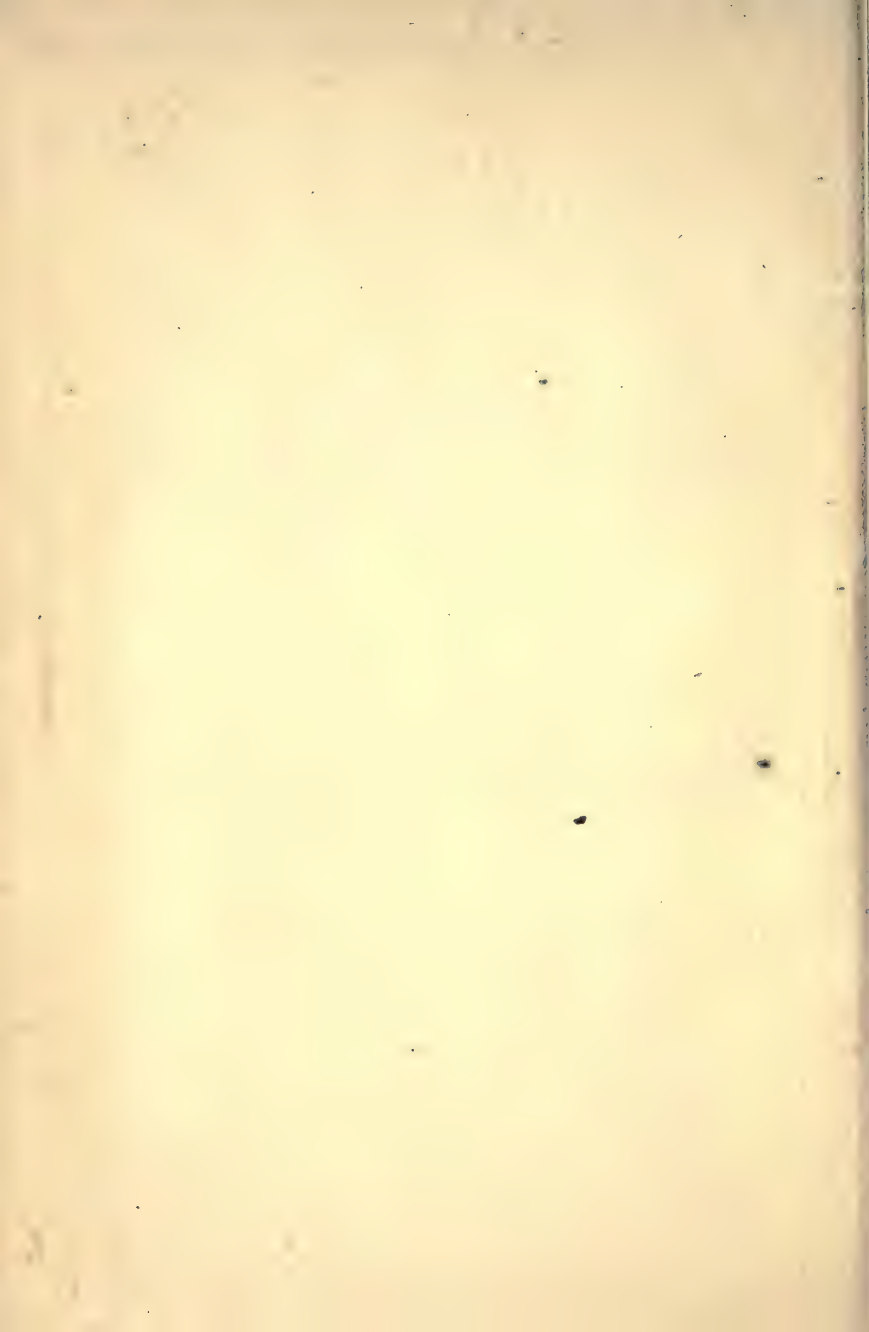


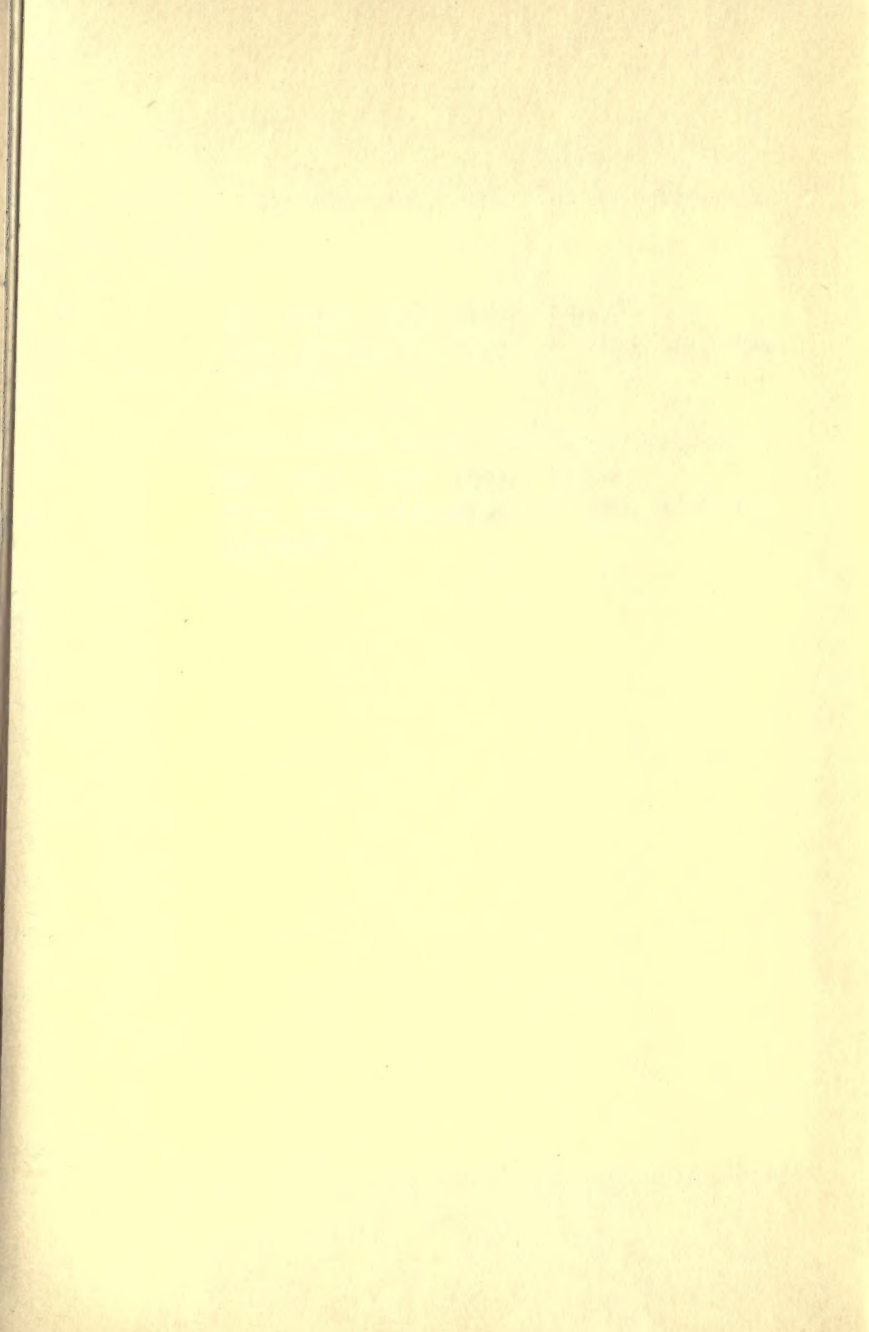
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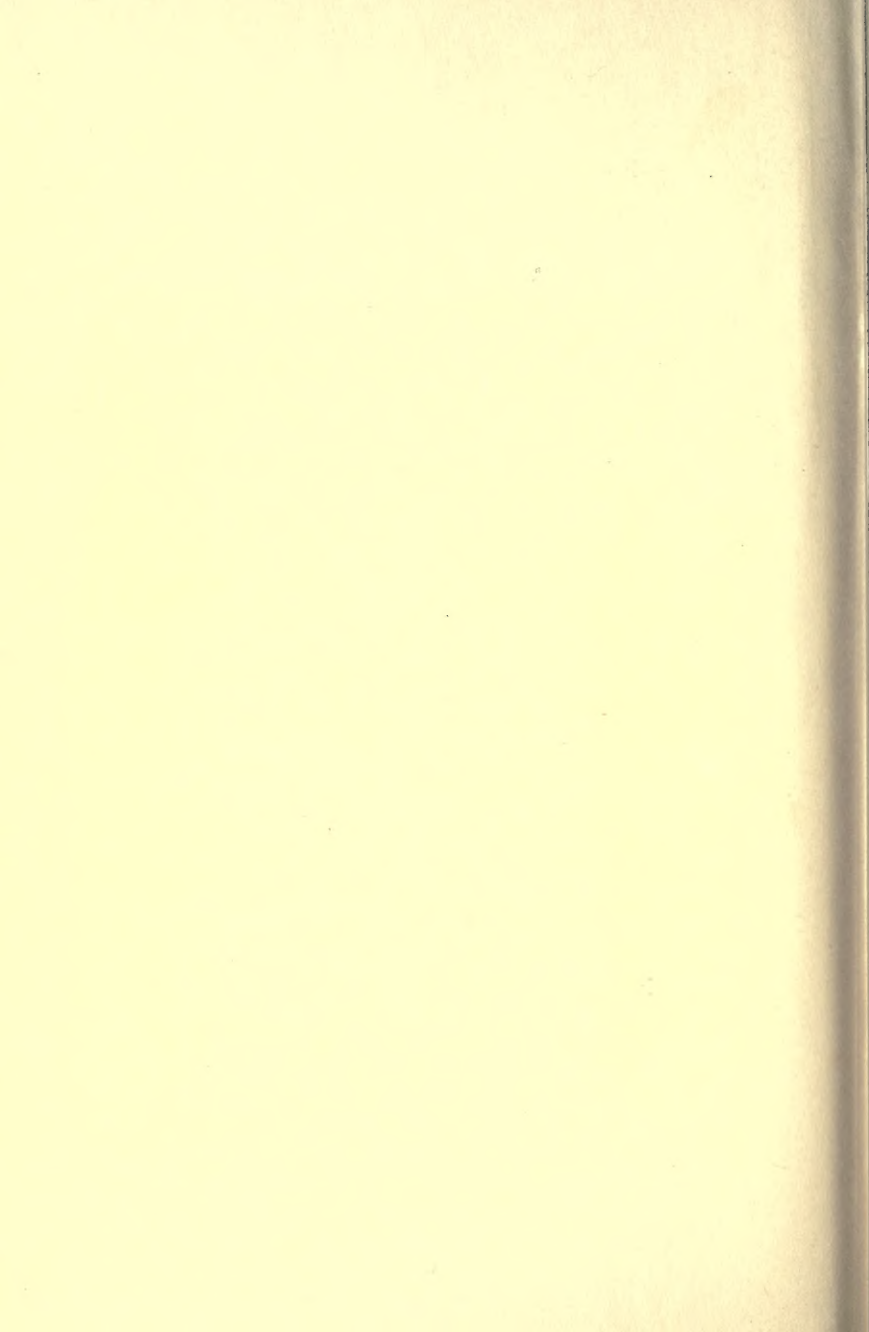
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